



**Changing Status and Politics of Rajput Kingdoms
during 1707-1750 (with Special Reference to Amber
(Jaipur) and Marwar)**

Ph.D. Thesis

By

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DECLARATION

I, **Anand Kumar**, student of Ph.D. hereby declare that the thesis titled "**Changing Status and Politics of Rajput Kingdoms during 1707-1750 (with Special Reference to Amber (Jaipur) and Marwar)**" which is submitted by me to the Department of History and Culture, Faculty of Humanities and Languages, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, fellowship or other similar title or recognition. This is to declare further that I have also fulfilled the requirements of Para 11((b) and (g) of the Ph.D. Ordinance, the details of which are enclosed at the end of the Thesis, and that there is no plagiarism.

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On the basis of declaration submitted by **Anand Kumar**, student of Ph.D., I hereby certify that the thesis titled **“Changing Status and Politics of Rajput Kingdoms during 1707-1750 (with Special Reference to Amber (Jaipur) and Marwar)”** which is submitted to the Department of History and Culture, Faculty of Humanities and Languages, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is an original contribution with existing knowledge and faithful record of research carried out by him under my guidance and supervision.

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Date: 28.9.2022


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Introduction

As the process of the decline of the Mughal Empire gathered momentum in the post-Aurangzeb period and the weakening of the imperial authority set into motion the process of political disintegration, two different categories of regional political formations began to take concrete shape in the eighteenth century. On the one hand, powerful Mughal provincial governors became relatively autonomous of the central authority and began to lay the foundations of the Nawabi states of Awadh, Hyderabad and Bengal. The rulers of these states were steeped in Mughal political and administrative culture and they, therefore, retained the basic features of the Mughal political and administrative system in their respective *riyasats*. On the other hand, regional states emerged in other parts of the Empire that were the outcome of successful zamindars-led rebellions against the Mughal Empire and that diverged, in many significant respects, from the political and institutional framework of the Mughal state. These regional polities included the states established by the Marathas, Sikhs, and Jats.¹

The eighteenth-century Rajput states of Rajasthan did not fit into either of these two categories. The Rajput kingdoms did not try to overthrow the Mughal authority formally but in the light of the diminishing power of the Mughal authority, their relationship with it underwent certain changes. The Mughal emperors were no longer in a position to control the Rajput rulers and were frequently compelled to take help

¹ For two contrasting interpretations of the emergence of these two categories of regional state-systems accompanying the disintegration of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century, see M. Athar Ali, "The Passing of the Empire: The Mughal Case", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol.9, No. 3, 1975, pp.385-96, reprint, M. Athar Ali, *Mughal India: Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society, and Culture*, Oxford University Press: New Delhi, 2006, pp. 327-49, and Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh & the Punjab*, Oxford University Press: New Delhi, 1986.

from them. The rivalry among the claimants to the Mughal throne, factional politics at the Mughal court, rebellions in different parts of the empire, etc. forced the Mughal emperors to seek help from the Rajput rulers, particularly those of Jaipur (Amber) and Jodhpur kingdoms. The Rajput rulers on their part tried to take advantage of the situation but each Rajput ruler devised his strategies to realize his political ambitions in the new political scenario of the eighteenth century.

An attempt has been made in this thesis to explore the process of political change in Rajasthan that was caused by the growing vacuum created by the retreating Mughal state and the challenges faced by the Rajput rulers in the wake of internal developments and the crisis emerging from the rise of the Maratha power—a crisis that was to soon engulf these kingdoms. These three interrelated developments—the gradual withdrawal of the Mughal umbrella, the revival of conflicts and rivalries among the Rajput states and clannish reassertions within each of these kingdoms, and, finally, the growing Maratha military presence in Rajasthan from the third decade of the eighteenth century—transformed the politics of the Rajput states and forced them to respond to new possibilities and challenges leading to a complex process of state formation. Although Sawai Jai Singh, Ajit Singh and Abhay Singh continued to be allotted governorships in different provinces of the Empire and given high-ranking *mansabs*, it is clear that since the beginning of the eighteenth century, they were spending more time in their *watans* than in areas outside their ancestral territories. As the Marathas established their control over central and western India, the possibility of Rajput kings being appointed as *mansabdars* and provincial governors in the territories of the Empire virtually disappeared. the Rajput rulers became confined to their kingdoms. The Rajput kings of Marwar and Jaipur-Amber were no longer absentee rulers and began to try to place the polity and administration on a new

pedestal. Some of them, particularly Sawai Jai Singh, even began the process of imparting a new ideological orientation to their states without completely dispensing with the Mughal authority and its political culture. The doctoral thesis seeks to explore the political consequences of the declining Mughal authority on the political restructuring of the Kachhwaha and Rathore kingdoms. The rapid expansion of the Maratha power in the eighteenth century affected this process of Rajput state formation and imposed severe political and financial restrictions on it in the long run but the full impact of the Maratha depredations was felt only in the second half of the eighteenth century. The first half of the eighteenth century witnessed many novel experiments, especially under Sawai Jai Singh, in the field of state formation.

The second important theme to be examined in the thesis is the altered basis of mutual relations between the Rajput ruling houses in the post-Mughal period. The integration of the Rajput states into the political and cultural ambit of the Mughal Empire during the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries virtually stalled all possibilities of open warfare and alliance-making between these kingdoms without the approval and knowledge of the Mughal emperor. *Pax Mughalica* became the dominant factor in determining the relations of the ruling Rajput houses with each other. In other words, the Rajput chiefs could no longer change the basic framework of their political relations with each other without bringing the emperor into the picture. This situation began to change in the course of the eighteenth century. We now come across frequent instances of the Rajput rulers coming together to form alliances against the imperial power but also engaging in military warfare against each other in the changed political milieu of the eighteenth century. The intra- Rajput matrimonial alliances between the Kachhhwahas and the Sisodias became possible in the eighteenth century. New conflicts, alliance-making, negotiations, and political

bargaining patterns emerged among the Rajput chiefs in the post-Aurangzeb period. These developments indicate the changing contours of intra-Rajput dynamics in eighteenth-century Rajasthan. They clearly show that the Mughals were no longer the arbiters of the political relations between the Rajput rulers. At the same time, there was no going back to the pre-Mughal period because the Mughal experience through which these kingdoms passed during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries could not be erased and forgotten. The Maratha incursions in the eighteenth century also became a factor in shaping the relations between the Rajput ruling houses.

Thirdly, this doctoral research is aimed at probing how the changing political circumstances in the eighteenth century played a role in shaping the relations between the Rajput rulers and their nobles, especially their clansmen. Existing historiography tends to emphasize the sardars and *thikanadars* regaining the lost ground and restoring the pre-Mughal political system based on clan monarchy in which they enjoyed a strong position by virtue of their belonging to the ruling clans. However, the Rajput kings were determined to retain the centralized political system in their kingdoms that had developed during the Mughal period as a result of the influence of Mughal political and administrative ideals on the Rajput institutions. It may be pointed out here that clannish elements always remained an important component of the Rajput political system and it would be difficult to imagine Rajput monarchies without taking into account clan considerations. Thus the tension between the need of a centralized polity and attachment to clan-based political ideals was an important feature of eighteenth-century Rajput political culture in Rajasthan. Any attempt by the rulers to place themselves in a strong position vis a vis their nobles could be interpreted by the latter as a violation of established clan ethics and unite them against

the king or make them enter into new alliances with other Rajput rulers, rival claimants to the throne and even the Marathas.

As the process of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire was long-drawn, the changes mentioned above in the Mughal- Rajput relations and the relations between different Rajput houses occurred not suddenly but over some time in the course of the eighteenth century. In the immediate aftermath of Aurangzeb's death, prominent Rajput rulers maintained the existing framework of Rajput- Mughal relations as they had evolved since the reign of Akbar, and attempts were made by them to keep the new emperor, Bahadur Shah I, in good humor. However, it soon dawned upon rulers like Sawai Jai Singh and Ajit Singh that the Mughal emperor's authority was on the wane and various factions of nobility held sway at the Mughal court. The thesis examines how the diminishing powers of the Mughal emperor catapulted the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan into an even stronger position at the Mughal court than they had ever been in during the reigns of previous Mughal emperors. Many existing secondary works, particularly the pioneering study of Satish Chandra, have highlighted the nature of factional politics at the Mughal court in the post-Aurangzeb period and the role played by the Rajput kings such as Sawai Jai Singh and Ajit Singh.²

Among the rulers of the leading Rajput kingdoms of Rajasthan during the first half of the eighteenth century, the most powerful and prominent figure was Jai Singh II or Sawai Jai Singh (r.1700-1743), the king of Amber-Jaipur, the Kachhwaha principality of eastern Rajasthan or the Dhoodhar region. The two Rathore Rajput kingdoms of Marwar-- Jodhpur and Bikaner-- were also among the powerful principalities in eighteenth-century Rajasthan. Between these two, the Rathore kingdom of Jodhpur was larger in size and more powerful in terms of military strength and political

² Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court*

influence within Rajasthan and the larger arena of Mughal- Rajput relations. In the post-Aurangzeb period, Ajit Singh (r.1707-24) and Abhay Singh (1724-49) ruled in Jodhpur while the rulers of Bikaner, in chronological order, were Sujan Singh (r. 1700-35), Zorawar Singh (r. 1735-45) and Gaj Singh (r. 1745-88). The Sisodia kingdom of Mewar was regarded as one of the three most powerful Rajput states of Rajasthan, Amber-Jaipur and Jodhpur being the other two. At the time of Aurangzeb's death, Maharana Amar Singh II (r. 1698-1710) was the king of Mewar. He was succeeded by Sangram Singh II who, in turn, was succeeded by Jagat Singh II (r. 1734-51).³

Historiography

A galaxy of historians has written extensively on Rajasthan history and particularly on the themes discussed in this thesis. Their contribution has enriched our knowledge immensely and has opened up new areas of research.

Col. James Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* written in 1829 is a pioneering work for the study of this region and had an impact on all later writings⁴. Tod's interpretation of the history, society, and culture of Rajasthan was influenced by European Medieval feudalism and an early version of nation and nationalism. He was East India Company's first political agent at Mewar where he made a huge collection of bardic literature which later became the source of history writing. B.N.Reu's *Glories of Marwar and the Glorious Rathors* gives a grand view of the Marwar state⁵.

³ For a relatively recent and comprehensive account of the political history of the Rajput states of Rajasthan in the eighteenth century, see Rima Hooja, *A History of Rajasthan*, Rupa & Co.: New Delhi, 2006, pp. 653-766.

⁴ James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol. I & II (W. Crooke ed.), Delhi, Reprint, 1971.

⁵ B.N. Reu, *Glories of Marwar and Glorious Rathors*, Jodhpur, 1943.

V.S.Bhargava's *Marwar and the Mughal emperors*⁶ traces the history of Marwar from the early days of the Mughals to the last days of the Mughal empire. The role of Marwar sardars in the rise and fall of the Mughal empire has been discussed. V.S.Bhatnagar's *Life and times of Jai Singh*⁷ is a kind of biographical work but it talks about Jai Singh's policy towards the Mughals, Marathas, and other states of Rajputana. His role as a conciliator and peacemaker has been highlighted. H.C.Tikkiwal's *Jaipur and later Mughals*⁸ discusses the relations of Amber rulers with the Mughals. The role of Jai Singh in protecting imperial interests in different areas has been discussed in detail. G.D.Sharma's *Rajput Polity*⁹ deals with the history of Marwar during the Mughal rule. It traces the evolution of political structure in Marwar. The role and composition of the nobility are highlighted.

Shivdutt dan Barhat's *Jodhpur Rajya ka Itihas*¹⁰ gives a detailed account of Maratha's intervention in Marwar. It also gives details about the internal feud among the Marwar rulers and its impact on the functioning of the state. Shyam Singh Ranawat's *Rajput Nobility* is a detailed account of the composition, role, and responsibility of the nobles.¹¹ The discussion is with special reference to the Kachhawaha nobility. Rima Hooja's *A History of Rajasthan* is a detailed account of the history of Rajasthan from its earliest times. There is a focus on the political history of Rajasthan through the ages but along with it an overview of other aspects of society is also presented¹². R.S.Sangwan's *Jodhpur and later Mughals* discuss the changing relations of the

⁶ V.S. Bhargava, *Marwar and the Mughal Emperors*, Delhi, 1966.

⁷ V.S. Bhatnagar, *Life and Times of Sawai Jai Singh*, Rajasthan Hindi Granth Academy, 1688–1743, New Delhi, 1974.

⁸ H.C. Tikkiwal, *Jaipur and The Later. Mughals, (1707-1803 AD)*, Book Treasure, Jaipur, 1974.

⁹ G.D. Sharma, *Rajput Polity*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1977.

¹⁰ Shivdutt dan Barhat, *Jodhpur Rajya Ka Itihas (1753-1800)*, Jaipur, 1982.

¹¹ Shyam Singh Ranawat, ed. *Jodhpur Rajya ri khyat*, ICHR and Panchsheel prakashan, Jaipur, 1988.

¹² Rima Hooja, *A History of Rajasthan*, Rupa & Co.: New Delhi, 2006

Mughals with the Jodhpur rulers. The gradual loss of trust between the two and the consequent developments has been detailed.¹³ R.K.Gupta and S.R.Bakshi's *Rajasthan Through the Ages* talk about the relationship of Jaipur rulers not only with the Mughals but also with the other powers. The process of expansion of the Jaipur state is also the focus of the book.¹⁴ R.K.Saxena's *Marwar under Ajit Singh and Abhay Singh* is a collection of grants and *pattas* during the period of both rulers. It gives information regarding changes in the *pattadari* system which is helpful in the study of economic and institutional study.¹⁵

Most of the works mentioned above describe the historical events that occurred in the Marwar and Amber kingdoms during the period the medieval and modern periods. Many of them also discuss the role and the position of nobility in the politics and administration of the Kachhwaha and Rathore kingdoms. G D Sharma's *Rajput Polity* is based on archival sources and throws light on the long-term changes in the nature of the Rathore state of Jodhpur. He discusses the salient features of state formation in Marwar during the pre-Mughal, Mughal and post-Mughal periods. Similarly, V S Bhatnagar's work provides a detailed account of the political, administrative and cultural history of the Amber-Jaipur kingdom during the reign of Sawai Jai Singh. However, none of these works, with the possible exception of G D Sharma's *Rajput Polity*, engages with the issue of post- Mughal changes in the political structure, political relations and political culture in an integrated manner exploring the eighteenth-century political dynamics in Rajasthan in which the Mughals, the Rajput rulers, the nobility of the Rajput states and the Marathas were the major players.

¹³ R.S. Sangwan, *Jodhpur and later Mughals*, Pragati Publication, Delhi, 2007, p.2

¹⁴ R.K. Gupta and S.R. Bakshi, *Rajasthan Through the Ages*, Books Treasure, Jodhpur, 2017

¹⁵ R.K. Saxena, *Bahi during the time of Ajit Singh and Abhay Singh*, Maharaja Man Singh Pustak Prakash Research Center, Mehrangarh fort, Jodhpur, 2017.

Chapterisation

Chapter One discusses the changing status of the eighteenth-century Rajput nobility in the states of Rajasthan in the wake of the gradual decline of the Mughal authority. The Rajput rulers now faced challenges from their nobles as the latter realized that help from the imperial authority to the rulers was no longer available. The weakening of the Empire led to changes in the position of the nobility also. The factional fight among different groups came to the fore. This was closely related to the activities and position of their Rajput kings which was changing as the imperial authority was weakening. The rulers tried to find new ways of legitimizing their authority and many symbols- new and old were used.¹⁶ Sawai Jai Singh took various measures to segregate people on caste and religious lines to control some of the defiant religious groups. He attempted to establish a socio-religious order based on orthodox Brahmanical norms. In the case of Jodhpur, after the death of Maharaja Jaswant Singh, different sardars took different sides and there was no unified plan of action. The strength of the ruler was an important factor in keeping the nobility under control. Taking advantage of the weak position of the ruler and the help provided by the Maharana of Mewar, the Rathore sardars started plundering the imperial thanas. Indra Singh who had been appointed by the imperial authority couldn't control the situation. Sonag Rathore and Bhati Ram who were the faujdars of Jodhpur and Ajmer respectively were expelled.¹⁷

The factional rivalry in Marwar in the closing decades of the seventeenth century was a recurring feature of the nobility. It was temporarily settled and in the absence of

¹⁶ For detail discussion see R.P. Bahuguna, "Religion and State in Eighteenth century Rajasthan: Sawai Jai Singh and 'reformed' Vaishnavism", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 2013, Vol. 74, p.353-362.

¹⁷ Jagjeevan Bhatt, Nityanand Dadhich ed. *Ajitodaya*, Rajasthani Granthagar, Jodhpur, 1986, p.20

Durgadas and Sonag Rathore was accepted as their leader. They renewed their offensive action in the Parganas of Merta, Sojat, and Jodhpur and inflicted heavy losses on the Mughals. They also started realizing land revenue from the cultivators in various parts of Marwar. The faujdars of these areas were compelled to buy peace with them¹⁸. It was agreed upon by the Mughals that Ajit Singh would be granted Jodhpur and a suitable *mansab*. But due to the death of Sonag Rathore, the agreement could not be put to emperor Aurangzeb. After the death of Sonag, Ajab Singh Champawat, other Champawat sardars like Udai Singh Champawat and Ajab Singh Champawat became the leaders and there was no dispute on the question of leadership. The absence of Durgadas Rathore did not affect their activities. Despite the superior military strength of the Mughals, the Rathores were able to challenge the Mughal officials at many places like Sojat, Mandal, Sarwarpur, Toda, Nagaur, and Jaitaran. etc. The Bhils and Meenas were employed by the Marwar sardars against the Mughals.

The rift among the Rathore sardars occurred soon again as they found it difficult to continue resistance against the Mughals due to the problems of resources. Udai Singh Rathore decided to change the strategy and in order to infuse enthusiasm among the sardars, he decided to bring out the Maharaja (Ajit Singh) in public. This again created a rift among them. Durga Das decided to return to Marwar. Udai Singh Rathore had gained prestige and unquestioned leadership in the absence of Durgadas. Other Rathore sardars also wanted to avoid Durgadas's intervention. They were fully conscious of the fact that in the presence of Durgadas it would be difficult for them to have any direct approach to the king as he would be under his control. In this period of hardship, they were fighting without any ruler. Now they were more willing to

¹⁸ Asopa Ramkaran, *Rajroopak*, Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Kashi, 1998, p.51

work under the supreme command of their Raja rather than under the leadership of Durgadas.

In the years preceding the death of Aurangzeb, Durga Das also attempted to consolidate his power by winning over Rathore sardars and others. He never refused to associate himself with other Rathore sardars against the Mughals. Udai Singh and his followers had established their influence over Ajit Singh. Durgadas Rathore, while keeping himself aloof from Ajit Singh, made efforts to consolidate his position through the support of the Rathore sardars. The Mughals on their part tried to secure the support of the local sardars and started granting them land on *ijara* (revenue farming). As a result of this policy, many Rathore sardars and others joined the imperial service.¹⁹ The practice of *ijara* was a significant feature of the land revenue administration of Marwar. This was the situation before Ajit Singh was brought out of concealment and appeared in public as the king of Marwar.

The appearance of Ajit Singh and the arrival of Durgadas Rathore compelled the Mughal commanders to change their policy in Marwar. The Mughal officers had realized that without a mass defection among the followers of Ajit Singh it would be impossible for them to maintain their hold in Marwar. The presence of Ajit Singh was expected to make the situation more difficult for the Mughals. Shujat Khan adopted a policy of conciliation with the Rathore sardars.²⁰ Accordingly, he offered the *mansabs* to the Rathore sardars and asked them to take the *jagirs* on *ijara*. The Mughals made a very significant change in their policy and started negotiating directly with Durgadas Rathore. The stature of Durgadas had increased due to his role in solving the political crisis in Mewar. The Mughals tried to placate him and he also adopted a favorable

¹⁹ Sangwan, *Jodhpur*, p.2

²⁰ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.22

attitude towards the Mughals. As soon as he received the *mansab*, he accepted the faujdari of Sorath and left Marwar in a state of uncertainty. Durgadas succeeded in securing a very high *mansab* for himself.

Ajit Singh decided to make the changes in the administration of Jalor. Udai Singh Champawat failed to maintain his position in the nobility and went over to the side of Mohkam Singh. The weak position of the king emboldened them to challenge even the king. The factional rivalry took another course. They didn't succeed in their scheme as Ajit Singh still enjoyed the support of the sardars belonging to the Champawat, the Kumpawat, the Udawat, the Mertia Rathores sub-clans and the other non-Rathore sardars. Apart from the Rathore sardars, there were several other sardars who came in support of Ajit Singh. After the occupation of Jodhpur, he tried to revive the old administrative pattern and changed the office of Pradhan. This annoyed a section of the nobility who changed their sides. Udai Singh and his followers defected to the side of Mohkam Singh. The defection of Udai Singh did not however change the attitude of any sizeable section of the Champawat sardars who were not prepared to break their traditional bonds with him. Ajit Singh recognized the importance of the Champawats by conferring the post of the Pradhan on Mukand Das.²¹ This led to a factional fight and the Mertia and Udawat sardars looked for an opportunity to oppose the Champawats.

To control the factional fight the post of Pradhan was offered to Durgadas Rathore. Durgadas Rathore not only refused the office but also refused to accept any *jagir* in Marwar. The acceptance of the office of the Pradhan would have annoyed Mukand Das who had held the office of the Pradhan since the defection of Udai Singh

²¹ G.D. Sharma, *Rajput Polity*, Manohar, Delhi, 1977, p.185.

Champawat and had considerable influence in state politics and among Champawat Rathores. The factional fight did not end even after Durgadas declined the offer of Pradhanship. Ajit Singh decided not to make any change in the position of Mukand Das Champawat who held this office. But this did not solve the problem. Some non-Champawat sardars rebelled against Ajit Singh and tried to form a league against him. They also expected help from the Mughal emperor as he was annoyed with Ajit Singh. They proclaimed an imposter, Dalthambhan, the ruler of Jodhpur. The nobility now challenged the king and expected help from the Mughal authority.

In the years following immediately after the death of Aurangzeb, the weak position of the Marwar king once again gave the nobles like Durgadas Rathore a chance to gain importance both in the politics of the Marwar and the Mughals. The political situation allowed him to strengthen his position once again. Even Sawai Jai Singh wrote a letter to Durgadas Rathore after being dislodged from Amber by emperor Bahadur Shah I in 1708 and requested him to intercede on his behalf to the imperial authority. The factional fight among the nobles reached another level and at times there were conspiracies against the king also. The kings also at times became a party to these rivalries. Ajit Singh, after occupying Jodhpur for the second time made no changes in the official assignments and the office of the *pradhan* remained with Mukand Das and Raghunath Singh Champawat was appointed the *hakim* of Jodhpur.²² Ajit Singh also nursed an ill-will against Mukand Das. The rivalry between the ruler and the nobility reached another level when Mukand Das planned to dislodge Ajit Singh from the gaddi of Jodhpur. He was under the impression that after the occupation of Jodhpur the emperor would favor Mohkam Singh and his support would strengthen the

²² Raghuveer Singh and Manohar Singh Ranawat, ed. *Jodhpur Rajya ri khyat*, ICHR and Panchsheel prakashan, Jaipur, 1988, p. 366

imperial position at Sambhar. Ajit Singh had to take strong measures as he could see the impending danger which could have engulfed him after the arrival of Bahadur Shah in Marwar. The popular discontent against Mukand Das also provided him a favorable opportunity to get rid of him. A notable change in the position of other officers was that they were imprisoned for not making the payment to the state. Ajit Singh appointed hakims in all the Parganas of Marwar. The Bhandaris were appointed as hakims in almost all the Parganas of Manwar. A few non-Bhandari officials were also appointed but on the recommendation of Bhandari Khivsi. The office of the *shiqdar and bakshi* remained with non-Bhandaris and non-Rathore sardars.

After the Champawats, the Bhandaris gained the monopoly of all important state offices. Although before Ajit Singh, the Bhandaris had enjoyed the office of the *pradhan*, the *diwan* and the *hakim*, etc., they never held so many important posts at the same time. The Bhati sardars who since the time of Raja Udai Singh held a respectable position in the administration were also eliminated during Ajit Singh's reign. The Champawats lost their influence in the state administration. Although all important administrative offices remained in the hands of non-Rathore sardars, the position of the Rathore sardars in the Marwar nobility remained predominant. The number of the Rathore sardars was considerably higher than that of the non-Rathore sardars and others. Among the Rathore sardars, the Champawats held the highest position in the nobility during the period of this study.

The position of the nobles reached another level when they played an important role in intervening on the issue of succession to the Jodhpur *gaddi* (throne) and deciding on the successor to Ajit Singh. Raghunath Bhandari who was in Delhi played a crucial role in the decision of the Mughal emperor who favored Abhay Singh as the new

ruler.²³ Abhay Singh on his part sided with one or the other group much to the dissatisfaction and discontent of the rival group. This had become necessary as his position was not very strong now and he was facing multiple challenges. The factional conflict among the nobility became even sharper. Abhay Singh decided to marry the daughter of Jai Singh despite the strong advice of the Rathore sardars. The other group supported the decision. The rivalry reached a violent level when Bakhat Singh issued orders to imprison the Bandaris. Abhay Singh had to put Raghunath Bhandari under house arrest to conciliate the other group.

The entry of the Marathas compelled them to keep the nobility in good humor. The rival faction got an opportunity to side with the Marathas to settle the score with the king. Many times it was the deftness of the nobles which saved the situation for the kings. Bhandari Khinvi saved the situation when he prevailed over the Marathas and persuaded them to leave Marwar when Anand Singh and Rai Singh had invited the Maratha generals Kanthji Dabhade and Peeluji Gaikwar. In the same manner, Raghunath Bhandari played a crucial role when Jai Singh planned an attack on Marwar. He used his good relations with Jai Singh and prevailed upon him not to invade.

Chapter Two deals with the changes in the *Pattadari* and the *Jagirdari* systems in Marwar during the eighteenth century. The system of *Bhai-bant* provided an opportunity to various Rathore princes or sardars belonging to the various Rathore or non-Rathore clans to maintain hereditary claims over their respective territories. The territorial claim of these sardars was recognized over the areas which had been

²³ A.S.Arha, "Rival parties in Eighteen century Marwar court: Competing claims to Ecology and Resources", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 2014, Vol.75 (2014), pp- 371-76.

conquered by their ancestors. These were known as *thikanas* and the possessors of these *thikanas* were known as *thikanadars*. The introduction of the *pattadari* system reduced the territorial claim of these *thikanadars* and a part of his *patta* became transferable. The rule of primogeniture also was no longer followed but it remained within the family. These *thikanas* remained with the holder so long as they rendered service to the Raja. It may be noted that the *thikanadars* had to pay a fixed amount to the state or the *pattadars* as the case may be. The annual consolidated amount paid by the *thikanadars* was known as *bhugat-bhog*. The state also granted a village or a part of it as *bhom* to the sardars. *Bhom* was a hereditary landed estate held free of assessment; though the holder paid a fixed amount to the state. Although the grant of *bhom* was considered to be a special favor of the state, the *bhomia* had to pay a fixed amount known as *bhom-bab* to the state.

The *bhomia*, being the descendant of the first colonizer, had the right of realizing land revenue from the peasants and also the right of allotting the uncultivated area to the cultivators. Almost similar privileges were enjoyed by the leaders of subdued tribes, Mers and Meenas, who were recognized as *bhomias*. In Eastern Rajasthan, some of the *bhomias* had the customary right to realize *kori bhomiki* from the traders passing through territories under their control. It was thus a customary levy and could be imposed by the *bhomias* who had been realizing it for long but practically all the *bhomias* collected it. In many cases the *bhomias* used coercive methods to compel the traders and banjaras to pass through territories held under their jurisdiction in order to exact *kori bhomi rahdari ki*.²⁴

²⁴ Dilbagh Singh, "Nature and Incidences of taxes levied on inland trade in Eastern Rajasthan during the 17th and 18th centuries", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1977, Vol. 38 (1977), pp.311-326.

The holder of the thikana was free to extend the area under cultivation by inviting cultivators from the neighboring areas. Thus the cultivated area under the thikana village could be extended. But the holders of *bhom* could not extend their holdings to the cultivated area beyond the land specified. The practice of the grant of the thikanas and *bhom* did not imply the emergence of any new class of nobility. In fact, it was not the replacement of the old by the new but a case of individual favour shown towards the members of the same family. The prevalence of the *pattadari* system does not imply that in the Rathore state the *pattadars* belonged to the Rathore clan only. The *pattas* were granted to the sardars of various Rathore subclans in various Parganas of Marwar. The clans which held high positions in the nobility maintained their superiority over other Rajput sardars. The total amount granted to other non-Rathore sardars was also very low. The Rathore sardars held the highest revenue in both the categories.

Ajit Singh started granting *pattas* to the Rathore sardars against their service leading to the restoration of the *pattadari* system. The old relationship based on the concept of *bhai-bant* was replaced by a new relationship based upon a hierarchy of ranks. The Rathore sardars had to accept certain obligations of service, and in lieu thereof, were granted *pattas*. The *pattadars* were obliged to render military service, within and outside Marwar. The number of followers and horsemen to be maintained depended upon the amount of salary and the rank of the *pattadars*. The *pattadars* were not expected to render service within Marwar alone but they could be asked to serve outside Marwar also. The condition of service outside Marwar was made compulsory due to the obligations of the Rathore ruler towards the Mughal state. The Rathore ruler needed the services of the sardars not only to keep his contingent whenever he had to serve outside Marwar, but also to maintain his control over the *jagirs* granted

to him. The *pattadar* held the right of collection of mal, and the right of ghasmari and other taxes given additionally. Thus, it is implied that the claim of the *pattadar* was strictly limited to the land revenue of the assigned village and this fact was specifically stated in the patta.

An important change in the nature of the *pattas* in comparison to the *pattas* granted to the Rathore sardars earlier was that while maintaining restrictions on the *pattadars*, the state could interfere in these patta lands. The *pattadar* was not the owner of the land. The ownership and the right of *riaya* remained undisturbed and they paid the state demand to the village officials who in their turn deposited it with the *hakim*. The *pattas* granted to the Rathore sardars outside Marwar could be taken back as *jagirs* of the *mansabdar* and were transferable or could be cancelled by the Mughal emperor. But the principle of transfer was not implemented strictly. The *pattas* remained with the grantee as long as he was in the state service or till his death. After the death of the grantee it depended on the will of the ruler to bestow the same patta upon the son of the deceased or not. The transferable *pattas* were known as pher-badal-ra-patta.²⁵

The *pattas* were not hereditary and could be taken into khalisa or transferred to any other *pattadar*. It is noteworthy that even within Marwar the grantee was not given the villages in one tappa.²⁶ Ajit Singh started granting *pattas* to the Rathore sardars against their service leading to the restoration of the *pattadari* system prevailing during the time of Jaswant Singh. He took a stern attitude towards the sardars who had not supported his cause during the period of adversity. Ajit Singh couldn't change the nature of the grant of the *pattas*. The domination of the clan continued.

²⁵ G.D. Sharma, "Some land revenue grants during the time of Ajit Singh and Abhya Singh of Marwar", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1969, Vol. 31 (1969), pp.288-292.

²⁶ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, ed. *Jodhpur Hukumat ri Bahi*, Book Treasure, Jodhpur, 1993, part 1

Ajit Singh deprived many of the sardars of their thikanas and patta land but in most of the cases after the confiscation of the patta or the thikanas it was granted to a sardar belonging to the same family.²⁷ Thus the clan rights over the patta lands were in general recognized by the state. The practice of the transfer of the *pattas* as prevalent during the time of Jaswant Singh and was continued by Ajit Singh during his reign. The patta villages of a grantee were not centered at one place, but were scattered over various tappas or Parganas. The *pattadar* was granted the land revenue of the area indicated in the patta and no additional claim could be inferred.

A new practice of collecting a lump-sum amount known as *tagirat-bal* from the *pattadars* along with the amount of *peshkash* or *hukamnama* was started by Ajit Singh. Though this tax existed earlier and was collected during times of adversity, it was now made permanent and added to the amount of *hukamnama*. The peasants paid this tax to maintain the right over their land and also to avoid plunder by the Rathore army. This *tagirat* was a sort of extra tax paid to the Maharaja or the *pattadars* in addition to the ordinary revenue to the Mughals. As the patta was granted in lieu of the service, the grantee held the patta as long as he remained employed in the state service. When the *pattadar* was removed from the service his patta was also cancelled. At times, on confiscation of the patta villages, the Raja could permit the *pattadar* to retain a few fields just to save him from becoming homeless and destitute. This was known as *Juni jagir*. The decline of the imperial power led to a change in the position of the *pattadars*, particularly who were serving outside Marwar. Their *jagirs* yielded only a small revenue. At the same time, due to increasing Maratha incursions into the Rajput territories and also on account of internal feuds among the Rajput Rajas, their presence was needed in Marwar. These changes became more

²⁷ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *Jodhpur*, part 1

apparent after the death of Abhay Singh when Maharaja Bijay Singh started realizing a lump sum amount from the *pattadars*. The amount fixed against the *rekh* (land revenue) was termed as *mutalba*. The *pattadars* assumed a different position, as now they had to pay a fixed amount or tribute to the Rathore ruler. Thus by paying a lump sum amount annually against their patta lands, the *pattadars* retained their control over their patta villages and thereby assumed the character of peshkash-i-zamindar.

In the case of the Kachhwaha state, Sawai Jai Singh, taking advantage of the weakening power of the Mughal authority, extended his *watan jagir* by taking *jagirs* in *tankhwah*, *Ijara* and *Inam*. At the time of his accession, the Kachhwaha principality had consisted mainly of the Amber territory only. Jaipur became a major state of the Rajputana as a result of the position enjoyed by its rulers in the service of the Mughals. The expansion of the Jaipur state did not take place essentially as the result of military conquests but mainly due to the transfer of various Parganas by the Mughal authority to the Jaipur rulers over a period of time. In the beginning, these transfers were not intended to be permanent and were in the form of either in ordinary *jagir* assignments or leases or *ijara*, but as the Mughal Empire weakened, the Jaipur rulers absorbed these territories into their hereditary landed possessions.²⁸ Jai Singh made full use of the situation and got many of his demands fulfilled and got the *jagir* of Parganaś Chatsu, Mauzabad, Dausa, and the Parganas which were in the *jagir* of the late Mirza Raja earlier. He also tried to get *jagirs* near his watan. This helped him in consolidating his position as it was easier to control the areas near his watan.

The weakening power of the imperial authority had an impact on the ruler and the nobility of Amber. The rulers of Amber while dealing with Mughal territory had to

²⁸ Satya Prakash Gupta, "Expansion of the territory of the Kachhwahas in Mughal times", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1965, Vol. 27 (1965), pp.177-183

adhere to the norms of administration that had been established by the Mughals. But the Jaipur rulers didn't apply all the rules and regulations of the Mughals in their areas. Jai Singh assigned the maximum *jagirs* to persons either from his clan or to the sardars who were directly under his control. The number of Rajawat assignees was the largest. The clan regime sustained the position of the Amber ruler. The Shaikhawats who were sub-assignees once upon a time became independent of the Jaipur ruler. Sawai Jai Singh followed the policy of transfer of *jagirs* only in the case of defaulters. Even tankhwah *jagir* was being passed on from father to son and then to grandson on a hereditary basis simply after examining the sanad. The clan affiliations were very important to keep the assigned under control. There was no *mansab* system in Jaipur. The instances of *ijara* istamrari (permanent or long-term revenue farms) increased and the practice of long-term *ijara* became common which led to the rise of territorial thikanedars, who later on began to act practically as independent chiefs.²⁹

The state itself borrowed money from the money lender at a high rate of interest but provided agricultural loans to the peasants at lower rates. They also tried to prevent complaints from peasants from reaching the imperial Court. The rulers made every attempt to increase the productivity in their areas there was a marked extension of cultivation during the period. The shortage of *jagir* and the subsequent oppression of the peasantry by the *jagirdar* was a common phenomenon during this period. The same situation was there in Amber but the same degree of oppression was not witnessed there and no extreme fiscal pressure was put upon the peasantry.

The Mughal practice of assigning the *jagir* was adopted here in the shape of sub-assignments, but there appears to be no pressure on the reserve of land available for

²⁹ Gupta, Expansion of the territory, *Proceedings*, pp.177-183

jagirs lying with the state. Jai Singh tried to secure Parganas in *jagir* including *bhomi* rights. The *bhomi* grants were held without any condition of service except that of watch and ward. *Bhumias* were known in the various parts of Rajasthan. These *bhumias* most probably did not enjoy a recognized right of an obligation of paying revenue at a fixed sum. They were neither *ijaradars* nor were they *istimiradars*. They should be treated as a special class who held their land in *bhomi*, or hereditary right. Their assessment was not permanently fixed.³⁰ So cherished was this tenure of *bhomi*, that the greatest chiefs always were eager to obtain it even in the villages wholly dependent on their authority. This grant was more secure and inheritable than the common grants. It may be that these persons sometimes asserted that they ought not to pay the assessed revenue in lieu of performing services but this may be doubted since the assessment on their lands was much lower.

Jai Singh also tried to get high *mansab*, remunerative *jagirs*, *ijaras*, and appointments as subedar and faujdar in the regions of their own choice. This was done with the purpose of keeping a watchful eye on the development of court politics. He did not hesitate either to join a powerful factional group at the Mughal court or desert it and join another faction to achieve his aims. He successfully used the money power to gain favours from the Mughal officials. These were annexed to his principality large areas outside his watan.³¹ As the Mughal administration began to collapse, Jai Singh did not hesitate to enlarge his zamindari rights at the cost of the local zamindars. Another feature of administration adopted by Jai Singh in watan and non- watan area was the start of farming system or the *ijara* system.. He leased out the whole Parganas

³⁰ Shireen Moosvi and S.P.Gupta, "Bhomi in the territories of Amber(C.1650-1750)", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1970, Vol. 32, Vol. 1 (1970) pp.353-359.

³¹ Sumbul Halim Khan, "Sawai Jai Singh's administration of the territories outside his watan 1694-1750", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1990, Vol. 51 (1990), pp.246-253.

of Kol to the local zamindars of the area. He maintained friendly relations with the Jats to implement the Imperial orders. It seems that the carrying out of administration by the Raja was not possible without such an arrangement. Jai Singh was conscious while dealing as an administrator in the areas outside his *watan* that there should be application of the rules of the Mughal administration, while keeping good relations with the local chiefs. Therefore, he adhered to the regular standard Mughal bureaucratic administration. He neither had the ambition to be the sovereign of these areas nor perhaps was he allowed by the Imperial authorities to extend his hold in these areas as he had done in the case of territories that were adjacent to his *watan*.³²

The Amber rulers tried to emulate the Mughal custom of sub-assigning their territory. Like the Mughals, the Amber rulers retained full control over the area thus sub-assigned to the various classes of the people, while having certain tracts under their direct control. The sub-assignee had to collect the land revenue in his *jagir* and extend all cooperation to the state officials. This amount was substantial. The maintenance of a military contingent was obligatory for the sub-assignee.

The Third Chapter of the thesis explores the relations between the Rajput states and the Mughals and also between the Rajput states themselves. Sawai Jai Singh after being deprived of Amber in 1708 by Bahadur Shah sought help from other Rajput rulers but received none. Ajit Singh after being dislodged from Jodhpur in 1707, favoured united action against the Mughals. They now decided to take a different course of action and abruptly broke away from the imperial army to get back their *watans*. This was a very important departure from the earlier practice and the imperial authority was challenged directly. Later Mewar also joined them. The

³² Sumbul Halim Khan, "Relations of ruler of Amber with their sub-assignees(1650-1750)", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1989, Vol. 50, Golden Jubilee session (1989) pp.306-311.

Maharana of Mewar also gave his daughter in marriage to Sawai Jai Singh. This was a very significant event as, throughout the heyday of the Mughal Empire since the reign of Akbar, no such matrimonial ties had taken place between these two ruling Rajput houses.³³ The marriage was arranged on the condition that the son born out of this marriage would ascend the gaddi of Jaipur and if a daughter was born, she would not be married to a Muslim.³⁴ The Mewar ruler had his own plan as he didn't want to antagonize the imperial authority and at the same time wanted to be with the Rajput rulers.

Attempts were made to bring about unity among Rajput rulers. Ajit Singh was coronated at Jodhpur and Jai Singh put the tika on Ajit Singh. The latter also accepted the invitation to marry the daughter of Ajit Singh. Jai Singh also wrote letters to Maratha ruler Shahu and Bundela leader Chatrashal. The control over Amber was secured and the Mughal faujdar, Husain Khan Baraha, was forced to leave.³⁵ After the victory at Sambhar, it was agreed that the revenue of the conquered territory would be equally divided between the two. Both of them shared the responsibility of administration equally. Maharana Amar Singh II of Mewar did not participate in it directly. The unity of these Rajput states was superficial as Ajit Singh after the occupation of Jodhpur did not extend immediate help to Sawai Jai Singh in recapturing Amber from his brother Bijai Singh who had been recognized as the legitimate ruler of Amber by the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah in 1708. It may be stated here that Bahadur Shah dispossessed Jai Singh of Amber as the latter had supported Azam in the Mughal war of Succession after the death of Aurangzeb. But the frequent attempts, however superficial, made by the Rajput rulers at unity forced

³³ V.S. Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, Rajasthan Hindi Granth Academy, Jaipur, 1998, p.30

³⁴ Bhatnagar, *Sawai*, p.34

³⁵ Chandra, *Parties and Politics at Mughal Court*, People Publishing House, Delhi, 1959, p.31.

some of the *mansabdars* at the Mughal court to adopt a conciliatory policy toward the Rajput rulers. Ajit Singh besieged the provincial capital for fifteen days and forced the Mughal subadar to pay a hefty amount before returning to Jodhpur.³⁶

Jai Singh wrote to the Sikh leader Banda Bahadur to seek armed assistance. But there was a suspicion regarding the unity among the Rajput rulers as Banda Bahadur promised to cooperate only when Ajit also agreed to this plan. The possibility of any alliance involving non-Rajput powers was curtailed due to the mistrust among the Rajput rulers. The Mughals on their part tried to avert the Rajput-Sikh coalition and chose the path of diplomacy rather than that of armed confrontation with the Rajputs.³⁷ Jai Singh also wanted to secure the favour of the emperor, unlike Ajit Singh who decided to challenge him. Thus while Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were exchanging cordial letters with each other, they were also making individual efforts to get back their respective *watans* in the years immediately after the death of Aurangzeb. The idea of unity was limited only to talks and was not put into practice.

On many occasions, the two rulers worked at cross purposes. While Ajit Singh was to demonstrate his strength, Maharaja Jai Singh was persuading him to have an audience with the emperor. The political uncertainty at the Mughal court enabled Ajit Singh to extend his influence over neighboring states. He also delayed the evacuation of Sambhar and Didwana despite several reminders from Asad Khan. The united opposition to the Mughal authority was only when both were dissatisfied with the imperial authority on the issue of regaining their *watans*.

³⁶ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.368

³⁷ H.C. Tikkiwal, *Jaipur and the later Mughals*, Jaipur, 1974. p.28

The Mughals on their part tried to create a divide between the two rulers. The emperor conferred the title of Mirza Raja Sawai on Jai Singh but no such favor was shown to Ajit Singh. After pursuing the path of belligerency for a long time Ajit Singh also became submissive to the Mughals and a treaty was concluded between him and Husain Ali Khan. Ajit Singh submitted to Husain Ali and in proof of his loyalty agreed to marry his daughter to Farrukh Siyar. This was a very significant incident. On one hand, Ajit Singh was indulging in aggressive activities against the Mughals and on the other hand, entered into a matrimonial alliance with them. Maharaja Jai Singh was no longer interested in opposing the Mughals jointly with Ajit Singh if the emperor agreed to appoint him the subadar of Gujarat or Malwa. The primary objective of the Rajput rulers was to get their demands fulfilled.

The unity among the Rajput rulers was always in doubt. So much so that Jai Singh joined the Mughal army sent against Ajit Singh.³⁸ The growing animosity between Jai Singh and Ajit Singh was due not only to the factional rivalry at the Mughal court but also because both of them wanted to extend their influence over Rajputana. Both rulers sided with the influential groups at the Mughal court and tried to maximize their gains. They also refused to be present in the areas that were granted to them despite deteriorating political and administrative conditions in those areas. The neglect of these areas gave chance to other powers like Marathas to extend their influence.

The relations between Maharaja Jai Singh and Ajit Singh were always vacillating. Jai Singh was married to the daughter of Ajit Singh in 1720. The acceptance for this marriage was given at the time of the first occupation of Jodhpur. Despite this matrimonial alliance, Jai Singh continued intriguing with the opponents of Ajit Singh

³⁸ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.370

and the Sayyids. In spite of the cordiality established between the two Rajas, Jai Singh secured the clandestine support of emperor Mohammad Shah. Ajit Singh on his part wanted to use the alliance with Jai Singh to consolidate his position in Ajmer. The change in court politics was one of the important factors in deciding the status of the Rajput rulers. Ajit Singh knew that due to the change in the court politics, he would not be allowed to continue as the subadar of both Gujarat and Ajmer. This proved true when soon after the defeat of Abdullah Khan, he was removed from the subadari of Gujarat and Ajmer.³⁹ In retaliation, he started plundering the imperial territory. This was a direct challenge to the Mughal authority. At the Mughal court, there were different opinions, some wanted to chastise him while others wanted to conciliate him.

Ajit Singh soon had to change his way when a full-fledged imperial army was set out against him. He sought the help of Jai Singh to conclude peace with the emperor. Jai Singh helped him but later entered into an alliance with the emperor to get Ajit Singh killed. Jai Singh's role in the murder of Ajit Singh has been a matter of controversy. The active military aid extended by Jai Singh to Abhay Singh and the subsequent marriage with his daughter soon after the event create suspicion of his complicity.⁴⁰ It was popularly believed that Abhay Singh, Bakht Singh, and Bhandari Raghunath were all in league with Jal Singh in the murder of Ajit Singh.

Chapter Four discusses the mutual relations among the Rajput states in the context of growing Maratha political and military presence in central and northern India. In the absence of a strong Mughal regime, the Rajput rulers faced many new challenges. The problem of succession was always there in the Rajputana which was settled by

³⁹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.93

⁴⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.240

the Mughal authority by the grant of the *tika* to one claimant. Now the rival claimants felt emboldened to carry out their struggle and seek support from the Marathas. After the death of Ajit Singh, the general atmosphere was against Abhay Singh. It was a challenging situation when the rival claimant entered into alliance with the Marathas to secure their help for the occupation of Jodhpur.⁴¹ This alarmed the rulers of Mewar and Amber. Maharana Sangram Singh of Mewar and Jai Singh tried to settle their disputes with the Rathore princes. Jai Singh wrote letters to Sangram Singh, Abhay Singh, and Rawal Durjansal to form a united front against the Marathas.⁴²

Jai Singh made these efforts with other Rajput rulers after his failure to arrive at an agreement with the Marathas. But even in the face of the Maratha threat, there was no unity among the Rajput rulers. they were not ready to assess the danger from the Marathas. Maharana Sangram Singh did not take any punitive action against the Marathas, disregarding the agreement which he had made with Abhay Singh, the ruler of Marwar. Both Sangram Singh and Jai Singh did not want to invite trouble from the side of the Marathas who had already shown their inclination towards these princes. Abhay Singh was also worried about the increasing interest of the Marathas in Marwar. Peshwa Bajirao had granted the *saranjami* (land revenue) of Jodhpur to Málhar Rao Holkar. In this situation, Abhay Singh had no other alternative but to buy peace from his brothers.⁴³ The rulers of Mewar, Amber, Kota, and Jaisalmer extended their cooperation to Abhay Singh but the mutual suspicion among them didn't end. The appearance of the Marathas on the territory of Mewar and Marwar paved the way for future inroads and mutual suspicion.

⁴¹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.95

⁴² Letters written by Jai Singh quoted in Sharma, *Rajput polity*, p.265

⁴³ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.371

The bitterness among the Rajput Rajas kept growing due to many political developments. During this period Jai Singh had unreservedly supported Maharaja Abhay Singh in keeping law and order in Marwar and in resolving the problems caused by the revolt of Rai Singh and Anand Singh. Although the cooperation shown by Maharaja Jai Singh indicates that both the rulers had trust in each other yet actually it was not so. Jai Singh was already facing trouble in his territory caused by the Shekhawat and the Khangarot sardars and despite repeated reminders by Jai Singh, Abhay Singh didn't take action against these Shekhawat sardars.⁴⁴ The agreements were never sacrosanct for the Rajput rulers and Jai Singh also gave shelter to Rathore Kishor Singh, the brother of Abhay Singh. Abhay Singh had earlier protested against the appointment of Muzaffar Khan as the faujdar of Ajmer and suggested that the combined armies of Mewar and Marwar should form a united front to check the imperial control over these Parganas. Jai Singh again took the same position that he had taken during the time of Ajit Singh and was not ready to involve himself in a scheme that might have annoyed the emperor. In fact, he pleaded before emperor Muhammad Shah for the grant of the subadari of Malwa which he ultimately managed to secure.⁴⁵

In their subadari areas, the Rajput rulers appointed their deputies and concentrated more and more in their own areas. The intention was to extend their area of influence. Abhay Singh was trying to get Ajmer, Sambhar, and Didwana, but he failed in his objective. He was appointed the subadar of Gujarat in place of Sarbuland Khan. The appointment of Abhay Singh as the subadar of Gujarat had far-reaching consequences for the politics of Marwar as well as of Rajputana. The departure of Maharaja Abhay

⁴⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.266

⁴⁵ Bhatnagar, *Sawai*, p.103

Singh from Gujarat after leaving all administrative responsibilities in the hands of his deputy, was significant for the external and internal politics of Marwar for it left the Maratha sardars free to reestablish their control in Gujarat.⁴⁶ Abhay Singh got engaged in extending his influence in Rajputana. The ruler of Bikaner was forced to make an offer of peace and accept the allegiance to the ruler of Jodhpur and also to pay rupees twelve lacs as indemnity. But due to the threat posed by the Marathas, the Jodhpur army had to withdraw from the occupied areas of Bikaner.

An attempt will be made in this Chapter to show that the Rajput rulers were more interested in fulfilling their personal goals even when the Maratha activities in Rajputana became more serious because of the entry of Malhar Rao into Bundi.⁴⁷ The apparent reason for their arrival in the territory of Bundi was to place Rao Budh Singh on the throne.. The Maratha sardars succeeded in their objective and proclaimed Budh Singh as the ruler of Bundi. Although Budh Singh could not maintain his possession for long, the military intervention of Maharaja Jai Singh restored Dalel Singh on the gaddi of Bundi. He also sought Abay Singh's help to drive out the Marathas from Rajputana.⁴⁸ Abhay Singh wanted to take advantage of the situation created due to Maratha incursions into Rajputana, to put forward his claim for the grant of the subadari of Ajmer. In order to check the threat from the Marathas, the Rajput rulers assembled at Hurda in 1734. Besides Abhay Singh and Bakht Singh, the rulers of Kota, Bikaner, Kishangarh, and Karauli were also present. One of the important developments was the recognition of the superiority of the Maharana of Mewar above all the rulers of Rajputana.

⁴⁶ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.373

⁴⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.268.

⁴⁸ Letter from Abhay Singh to Bhandari Amar Singh as quoted Sharma, *Rajput Polity*, p.272

Abhay Singh was trying to secure the subadari of Ajmer along with that of Gujarat and had shown his readiness to proceed to Ahmedabad if it was so desired by Nawab Khan-i-Dauran. His departure to Gujarat remained postponed due to the Maratha incursion into the Amber territory. It seems that Abhay Singh was waiting for a favourable reply from the Mughal wazir when he accepted the request of Jai Singh to help him against the Marathas.⁴⁹ The Marathas could isolate the Rajput rulers from one another. While the Marathas were plundering the territory of Jaipur, Abhay Singh did not render any military help to Jai Singh. Abhay Singh, Jai Singh, Durjansal, and other Rajput rulers joined Khan-i-Dauran to oust the Marathas from Rajputana but the Maratha commanders, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Sindhia harassed their contingent after isolating them from each other. The essence of the Hurda conference was lost very soon. Sambhar was sacked by them yielding a rich booty to the Marathas. On the advice of Jai Singh, Malhar Rao, Ranoji, etc. entered Marwar and conducted a fierce campaign that lasted for two months, culminating in the surrender of the Rathores before the Maratha commanders at Merta. Although the Maratha sardars left the territory of Marwar after securing a handsome indemnity, it became quite clear that the treaty was of no avail and no combined Rajput action against the Marathas was to be expected in the future.

Further weakening of the Mughal imperial authority and the repeated incursions and plundering raids of the Maratha sardars into the Rajput states in 1730 and 1740 had implications for the Rathore and Kachhwaha nobilities and their fluctuating fortunes and their relations with their rulers. This Chapter seeks to bring into sharp focus the changing perceptions and actions of the Rajput nobles, their dealings with the Marathas, and their attempts to make their positions secure in the chaotic

⁴⁹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.276.

circumstances that prevailed in Rajasthan due to the Maratha raids from 1730s onwards. The Rajput rulers also faced new challenges from their nobles as the latter realized that help from the imperial authority was no longer available. The challenge from their rivals forced them to stay in their own areas and their services in their subadari areas were curtailed. The entry of the Marathas further complicated the matter. The rivals started aligning with them creating more troubles for the rulers.

In the absence of the Mughal authority, Rajput rulers found it difficult to handle the challenges of their rivals. The court politics gave every claimant a chance to side with one or the other group in the court and get concessions. The feud between Bakht Singh and Abhay Singh for the *gaddi* of Marwar became inevitable. This feud had a significant bearing on the triangular relations between the Rajput rulers, their nobles, and the Marathas. Bakht Singh, son of Ajit Singh and brother of Abhay Singh, had been granted Nagaur almost as an independent *jagir* but he was not satisfied with it and wanted to secure more *jagirs* from the Mughal emperor. He was also not happy with the interference of Abhay Singh in the affairs of Nagaur. The friction between the two became quite obvious when Abhay Singh sent his army against Bikaner. The aim was to establish his superiority over the ruler of Bikaner and to recapture the thanas which had been seized by Zorawar Singh. Abhay Singh could not register any success against Zorawar Singh as he had to withdraw his army in order to march against Merta which was invaded by Bakht Singh. The conflict between the two brothers created divisions in the Marwar nobility and led to contradictory responses to Maratha intervention in Marwar.

The importance of the experienced nobles was realized by the rulers at the time of crisis. Abhay Singh released Bhandari Raghunath from prison and sent him to

conclude terms with Jai Singh when he got him completely isolated. He got a *farman* issued by the emperor for the assignment of Merta to Bakht Singh and proclaimed Ratan Singh, the brother of Abhay Singh, the ruler of Jodhpur. Another brother of Abhay Singh, Raj Kishor, sieged Parbatsar. Abhay Singh realizing the inferiority of his strength and the consequences of his defeat, initiated, negotiations with Jai Singh. Jai Singh demanded a huge amount as indemnity. After the defeat, Maharaja Abhay Singh and Bakht Singh joined together but the earlier suspicion didn't end. Jai Singh on his part sought help from the Marathas.

After the death of Sawai Jai Singh in 1743, the political situation of the Kachhawah state started deteriorating due to a civil war on the issue of succession. The problem of succession was raised on the basis of the agreement of 1709, according to which the son of the Udaipur Rani (Sisodia Rani) was to be installed or the *gaddi* after Jai Singh's death. Although Ishwari Singh had been recognized as the legitimate successor of Jai Singh, the claim of his younger brother, Madho Singh, who was the son of the Udaipuri Rani was supported by Maharana Jagat Singh II of Mewar. The involvement of the Maharana complicated the situation. He invited Maharao Durjansal of Kota for help. Maharao Durjansal who felt offended due to the intervention of Sawai Jai Singh in the affairs of Bundi, responded favourably to the request of the Mewar king. The Chapter seeks to examine how this conflict among the Rajput rulers over succession in Jaipur reshaped the relations between the rulers and made the Marathas an active player in Rajput politics.

In order to dislodge Ishwari Singh from the *gaddi* of Jaipur, the Maharana invited Holkar and promised him to pay rupees one crore if he seated Madho Singh on the

gaddi of Jaipur.⁵⁰ Accordingly, Maharana Jagat Singh along with the Maratha army marched against Jaipur. But the whole plan was disrupted as Ishwari Singh reached Amber before the arrival of the joint forces and offered money to the Maratha sardars who were won over to his side. The rulers of Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Kota continued fighting against Ishwari Singh and each of them tried to win over the support of the Marathas. It is significant to note that in no case did the rulers of Jodhpur and Udaipur unite against Jaipur because Abhay Singh did not support the cause of Madho Singh and the Maharana was not pleased with Abhay Singh's policy of expansion. The role of the Maratha sardars is interesting to note. They changed sides easily on the promise of money. The impact of these developments in shaping the course of Rajput politics in Rajasthan has been discussed in this Chapter.

The Chapter also discusses how the Maratha sardars became peacemakers and settled disputes among Rajput rulers. Abhay Singh sought the help of Malhar Rao Holkar to secure control over the areas which fell under his control. Bakht Singh got help from the ruler of Bikaner. The fight did not take place, as due to the revival of the conflict between Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh, Holkars had to march against Amber. However, Malharrao Holkar brought about a reconciliation between the two brothers.

⁵⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.281

CHAPTER ONE

Mughal Empire, Rajput Kings, and the Changing Role of Rajput Nobility at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century

The concept of Bhai-bandh was prevalent in Marwar during the 16thc. According to this the territory conquered by the Rathore rulers or their sardars with the co-operative effort of the clan, was considered to be a kind of joint state.¹ The Rathore sardars, by virtue being the descendants of the Rathore rulers, proclaimed equal rights with the ruler. This relation ship was based on the concept of Bhai-bandh and the rulers themselves allowed their family members to enjoy semi-independent status in their respective territories. This system of parcelling out the conquered territories among the princes and sardars was known as *bhai-bant*. The territories of Merta, Jaitaran, Siwana, Phalodi and Satalmer (Pohkaran) were held by the descendants of Rao Duba, Rathore Uda, Rao Bija, Rao Hamir and Rao Govind respectively in the beginning of the 16thc.²

These sardars of various Rathore sub clans replaced the incumbent sardars who also belonged to the same clan. This was done by sheer force either independently or with the help of the ruler. This led to internal rivalry among the Rathore sardars, and also conflict with the rulers. Gradually the defeated groups lost their position in the nobility, and the new groups rose to the position. However, this mobility was confined to an extremely narrow circle. Under this system, the Rathore sardars had the political and moral obligation to support the ruler in the time of crisis. However, the political

¹ G.D. Sharma, "Concept of kingship and the marwar nobility during the 16thc.", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1975, Vol. 36 (1975). pp.157-165.

² Sharma, Concept of kingship, *Proceedings*, pp.157-165.

support could be secured only when the ruler was strong enough to assert his authority.

These sardars could proclaim themselves independent under a weak ruler. Rao Maldeo was the first Rathore ruler who realised the problems caused due to the concept of Bhai-bandh. He therefore asserted that the concept included the concept of 'Bhai-band-Chakar' which implied the subordination of the Rathore sardars to the ruler. Maldeo dislodged the Rathore Sardars or princes who refused to serve under him. He asserted that a sardar was dependent for position on the goodwill of the Raja rather than on his inherent lights. To implement this principle Maldeo started the practice of assignment of the *pattas* (land revenue grants) to his sardars who were serving in his army. These *pattas* were assigned in the territory of Marwar as well as in the territories outside Marwar where Maldeo held his control. These assignees were not free to exercise their power independently under the new pattern. They were granted territories or *pattas* against which they had to perform certain obligations. However, the practice of granting *pattas* and territories made no specific changes in the character of the nobility. The nature of their holding was more permanent by virtue of their kinship ties and clan status in their respective territories.

After the death of Rao Maldeo, Marwar lost its independence and came under the control of the Mughals. The system of administration was reorganised according to the Mughal pattern.³ The old relationship based on the concept of kinship and brotherhood was replaced by a new relationship which was based upon a hierarchy of ranks. Sur Singh fixed the ranks of his kinsmen and converted their status to that of a nobility of the Mughal type. Their status in the court was also determined. At the court they were divided into two wings, called davi and jimani or left and right. In the

³ Sharma, Some land revenue, *Proceedings*, pp.288-292.

right wing were placed the descendents of Rao Rinmal and the headship of the wing was bestowed to the Champawats of Auwa. In the left wing were placed the descendents of Rao Jodha, and the headship of wing was bestowed to the Mertias of Ria. Rao Sur Singh also introduced some new elements in the *Jagirdari* system in the state and started assigning land revenue grants to the nobles for service to be rendered.⁴ Though the practice of grant of *pattas* was prevalent in Marwar it is difficult to determine the exact nature of the land revenue grants before the time of Raja Jaswant Singh.

In Amber Bharmal made an attempt to raise the status of some of the nobles above the rest during the 16thc. There was no fixed criterion to determine the grade and rank of nobles in Amber. The hereditary nobles were headed by the class known as 'Bhai Beta' or kinsmen. Nobles of this class claimed their share in the state territory under established practice. Bharmal had to face a tough opposition in his attempt to usurp the chiefship of Amber, which rightfully belonged to Askaran, his nephew and son of his brother Bhim. In order to appease his brothers he created a class of special nobles known as 'Bara Kotris'. Some of the groups that constituted it were Natahawat, Chaturbhujot, Khangrot, Balbhadrot, Sultanot, Kalyanot, Puranmalot, Pichyanot, Kumbhawat, Banvirpota, Sheobrahmapota and Kumbhani.⁵

The Kachhawaha nobility consisted of the chiefs who occupied allodial states as independent rulers, blood relations of the ruling family, persons who sought refuge from the state, hereditary in faithful employees of the state, etc. The two major factions of nobility were the Narukas and the Shekhwats, and commanded vast territories of the state land known as Narukhand and Shekhawati. The ruling chief of

⁴ Sharma, Some land revenue, *Proceedings*, pp.288-292.

⁵ Shyam Singh Ratnawat, *Rajput Nobility*, panchsheel prakashan, Jaipur, 1989, p.106.

the Kachhawaha clan was the fountain head of all powers and was the ultimate authority. The Mughals hardly interfered in the internal matters. Jai Singh ostracized these sub-clans as they were suspected of sedition. But he also acted in a patient and conciliatory way which helped in the territorial expansion.⁶

Factional Conflicts among the Nobles

After the death of Aurangzeb, the nobility of the Rajput states underwent many changes. The factional fight among different groups came to the fore. This was closely related to the activities and position of their kings which was changing as the imperial authority was weakening. The rulers tried to find new ways of legitimizing their authority and many symbols- new and old were used.⁷ Sawai Jai Singh took various measures to segregate people on caste and religious lines to control some of the defiant religious groups. He attempted to establish a socio-religious order based on orthodox Brahmanical norms. In the case of Jodhpur, after the death of Maharaja Jaswant Singh different sardars took different sides and there was no unified plan of action. The Rathore sardars who accompanied Jaswant Singh to Jamrud and the sardars at Jodhpur differed in their approach.

The Peshawar section held the view that in the absence of any male issue the Mughal emperor had the right to keep Jodhpur under khalisa or to make alternative arrangements with which the Marwar sardars didn't agree. The Rathore sardars in Peshawar urged the sardars in Jodhpur to maintain law and order and not to create any disturbance in the functioning of the Mughal authorities even if it was aimed at taking over the administration by them. It signified the might of the Mughal empire. It seems that the question of watan was not so important for them as they were ready to be

⁶ Ratnawat, *Rajput*, p.106.

⁷ Bahuguna, *Religion and State, Proceedings*, pp.353-362.

content with the occupation of other areas if Jodhpur was not granted to them. The Jodhpur section of the nobility led by Raghunath Bhati thought otherwise and decided to challenge the attempt of the Mughal authorities to take control of Jodhpur.⁸ Taking advantage of the rift between the two sections, some of the Rathore sardars started plundering some of the Parganas.⁹ This was a new practice on the part of the nobility who felt confident to indulge in such activities.

The Peshawar section of the nobility wanted to have conciliatory approach. They got some success when Aurangzeb reacted favourably to the news of the pregnancy of the two Ranis and issued a farman stating that Jodhpur alongwith Jaitaran and Sojat would be bestowed on the son of the deceased Maharaja on the condition that he appeared before the court¹⁰. It was quite often that the rivalry among different claimants to the throne would come out in open after the death of the incumbent king. These rivalries were settled only with the intervention of the Mughal authorities. Indra Singh found this opportunity favourable and made representations to the emperor for the grant of Jodhpur to him. The demand was declined by the emperor and it was made clear that Jodhpur would be bestowed on the sons of the deceased king. The hostile attitude and activities of the sardars of the Jodhpur section created a suspicion in the mind of Aurangzeb and the farman was withdrawn. Mir Khan who was stationed in the hilly areas of Jodhpur also suggested to the emperor that the farman be withdrawn till the time he returns from Jodhpur. An attempt was made to win over the Jodhpur section of the nobility and no changes were made in their service conditions and *pattas*. The Marwar sardars changed their earlier decision to resist

⁸ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *gfJodhpur*, Part 1

⁹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.366

¹⁰ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.20

when they came to know about the attitude of Aurangzeb who gave Merta to the Mughal army.

The escheating of the property of Jaswant Singh changed the situation and created another rift among the nobility. Sonag Rathore, probably with the tacit support of Rani Hadi, decided to challenge the Mughals.¹¹ The Rathore sardars, under the leadership of Raghunath Bhati, decided to avoid any opposition to the Mughal army till the birth of the Maharaja. The Mughal official Abdullah Khan after not being able to get the possession of Jodhpur fort due to the opposition of Sonag Rathore sent a report that the Rathore sardars were preparing for an attack on Sambhar, Didwana and Ajmer.¹² It was also reported that Rana Raj Singh had decided to support the Rathores.

Aurangzeb then decided to take offensive measures. He had promised that Jodhpur would be bestowed upon the son of Jaswant Singh. Sojat and Jaitaran were granted to them and the palace in the fort was to remain under their control. The officials were to be appointed by the emperor and the Rathore sardars were asked not to create any trouble.¹³ But the rift among them surfaced again. Bhati Raghunath agreed to these terms but Sonag Rathore did not. Later after much persuasion he agreed. The *Pattas* of the *Pattadars* were not disturbed even after the appointment of various imperial officers in the Parganas. Their holdings remained unaffected even after the Khalisa control over Jodhpur. This arrangement made it convenient for them to accept it.

¹¹ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *Jodhpur*, part 1

¹² Sharma, *Rajput Polity*, Manohar, Delhi, 1977, pp.161

¹³ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *Jodhpur*, part 1

Later Aurangzeb changed his decision and despite repeated requests by the Marwar sardars through various imperial officers, granted them only Sojat and Jaitaran¹⁴. After sometime he not only neglected the claim of Ajit Singh but granted the tika of Jodhpur to the other claimant Indra Singh¹⁵. Further he asked the Marwar sardars to submit the accounts of Jaswant Singh. Akbar had established the precedence by which the Mughal emperor could grant the tika to any person belonging to the same family while putting aside the claim of Ugra Sen.

The unity of the Rathore sardars was once again breached when Indra Singh was able to win over Sonag Rathore and other Rathore sardars to his side.¹⁶ They suggested that in place of khalisa it was better to accept Indra Singh as the ruler. Durgadas Rathore didn't agree with this argument and tried to win over as many sardars as he could. Some of the activities of Indra Singh helped Durgadas in winning back Sonag Rathore and Champawat Sonag. Indra Singh then appointed his own sardars and most of them were from Mertia, Udawat and Jaitawat clans. Thus a new class of nobility joined the services of Indra Singh.

The strength of the ruler was an important factor in keeping the nobility under control. Taking advantage of the weak position of the ruler and the help provided by the Maharana the Rathore sardars started plundering the imperial thanas. Indra Singh who had been appointed by the imperial authority couldn't control the situation. Sonag Rathore and Bhati Ram expelled the faujdar of Jodhpur and Ajmer.¹⁷ Dhawacha Sujan Singh took possession of the fort of Siwana and Durgadas Rathore took possession of the city of Jalor.

¹⁴ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *Jodhpur*, part 1

¹⁵ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.368

¹⁶ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.368

¹⁷ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.21

These actions alarmed the imperial authorities and soon the Imperial control was established in Marwar. Importantly the sardars who were working as faujdars in various Parganas were not dislodged. The help provided by the Maharana was also withdrawn and the Rathore sardars were left alone to fight against the Mughals. The revolt of Prince Akbar gave them another opportunity but the combined army of Akbar and Marwar sardars was defeated and the imperial control was established over Marwar but the Mughal faujdars of various Parganas were facing problems due to the resistance by the Rathore sardars. Sonag Rathore became their leader after the departure of Durgadas. The actions of the Rathore sardars makes it clear that in the absence of any strong ruler they were keen to act on their own.

The factional rivalry among the sardars was settled for a while and in the absence of Durgadas Sonag Rathore was accepted as their leader. They renewed their offensive action in the Parganas of Merta, Sojat and Jodhpur and inflicted heavy losses to the Mughals. They also started realizing land revenue from the cultivators in various parts of Marwar. The faujdars of these areas were compelled to buy peace with them¹⁸. It was agreed that Ajit Singh would be granted Jodhpur and a suitable *mansab*. But due to the death of Sonag Rathore the agreement could not be put to the emperor. After the death of Sonag Ajab Singh Champawat, other Champawat sardars like Udai Singh Champawat and Ajab Singh Champawat became the leaders and there was no dispute on the question of leadership. Infact they were nominated by the Rathore sardars. The absence of Durgadas Rathore didn't affect their activities. Despite the might of the Mughals and the problems of their soldiers, they were able to challenge the Mughal officials at many places like Sojat, Mandal, Sarwarpur, Toda, Nagaur, Jaitaran. etc.

¹⁸ Ramkaran, *Rajroopak*, p. 51

The Bhils and Meenas were employed by the Marwar sardars against the Mughals.¹⁹ The Rathore sardars of Champawat, Udawat, Kumpawat, etc., and Bhatias, Chauhan, Sisodia and their relatives were also employed. There were about sixty leading Rathore sardars during this time but no united attempt was made to oust the Mughals from Marwar.²⁰

The unity among the Rathore sardars was short lived. The Rathore sardars soon found it difficult to continue resistance against the Mughals due to the problems of resources. Udai Singh Rathore decided to change the strategy and in order to infuse enthusiasm among the sardars he decided to bring out the Maharaja in public. This again created a rift among them. Durga Das decided return to Marwar. Udai Singh Rathore had gained prestige and the unquestioned leadership in the absence of Durgadas. There were other Rathore sardars who also wanted to avoid Durgadas's intervention. They were fully conscious of the fact that in the presence of Durgadas it would be difficult for them to have any direct approach to the Raja as he would be under his control. In this period of hardship, they were fighting without any ruler. Now they were more willing to work under the supreme command of their Raja rather than Durgadas. For Udai Singh Rathore the return of Durgadas was distressing as he would have to work under his command. Therefore, he wanted to secure control over the Raja to maintain his position unchallenged.²¹ The support of Hada Durjansal increased his strength.

Durga Das also made an attempt to consolidate his power by winning over Rathore sardars and others. He never refused to associate himself with other Rathore sardars against the Mughals. Udai Singh and his followers had established their influence

¹⁹ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.23

²⁰ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.23

²¹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.179

over Ajit Singh. Durgadas Rathore, while keeping himself aloof from Ajit Singh, made efforts to consolidate his position through the support of the Rathore sardars. After strengthening their position the Rathore sardars again attacked the Mughal posts. The arrival of Ajit Singh in public strengthened the position of Udai Singh Champawat. Ajit Singh sent instructions to the sardars for the collection of the revenue from their villages.²² Another tax, faujbal was also revived. It may be noted that it was similar to the tax levied during Jaswant Singh's time but now its rate was increased.

The Mughals on their part tried to secure the support of the local sardars and started granting them land on *ijara*. As a result of this policy many Rathore sardars and others joined the imperial service.²³ The practice of *ijara* was a significant feature of the land revenue administration of Marwar. The appearance of Ajit Singh and arrival of Durgadas Rathore compelled the Mughal commanders to change their policy in Marwar. The Mughal officers had realized that without a mass defection among the followers of Ajit Singh it would be impossible for them to maintain their hold in Marwar. The presence of Ajit Singh was expected to make the situation more difficult for the Mughals. Shujat Khan adopted a policy of conciliation with the Rathore sardars.²⁴ Accordingly, he offered the *mansabs* to the Rathore sardars and asked them to take the *jagirs* on *ijara*.²⁵ Shujat Khan also sanctioned the chauth and the rahadari to Ajit Singh. But no official order was issued. Shujat Khan tried to open negotiations with Ajit Singh and asked the latter to reach Ajmer so that he could be given the

²² Sharma, *Rajput*, p.181.

²³ Sangwan, *Jodhpur*, p.2

²⁴ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.25

²⁵ Ramkaran, *Rajroopak*, p.52

mansab. But the proposal did not materialize as the Mughal Commander was suspected of treachery.²⁶

Changes in Mughal Policy

The Mughals made a very significant change in their policy and started negotiating directly with Durgadas Rathore. The stature of Durgadas had increased due to his role in solving the political crisis in Mewar. The Maharana had requested for the services of Durgadas which was duly done by him. For Durgadas it was quite a favourable opportunity. He was not certain about the support of prince Akbar. The Mughals tried to placate him and he also adopted a favourable attitude towards the Mughals. As soon as he received the *mansab*, he accepted the faujdari of Sorath and left Marwar in a state of uncertainty. Durgadas succeeded in securing a very high *mansab* for himself and his family members.

It was a notable change in the position of a noble when the *mansab* of a noble was higher than that of the ruler. While Durgadas was granted a *mansab* of 3000/2000, Ajit Singh was granted *mansab* of 1500/500.²⁷ The *mansabs* bestowed upon Ajit Singh was considerably low in comparison. Durgadas took the advantage of the situation to further his interests. As soon as he received the *mansab* he left Marwar to its fate and went away to Sorath. This created a problem in the politics of Marwar. It seems that Maharaja Ajit Singh, after taking possession of Jalor, took less interest in the affairs of the state. He had appointed a number of officials to look after his *jagir*.

The state of affairs in Marwar was very bad and Durgadas was severely criticized for his actions. Ajit Singh also didn't take interest in the affairs of the state. The rift once

²⁶ Ramkaran, *Rajroopak*, p.52

²⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.183

again surfaced among the nobility and Udai Singh Champawat who had assumed leadership of the sardars was challenged by a group led by Mertia Kushal Singh. They suggested to the Maharaja that he should try to conquer Jodhpur. They also wanted to return to the system of administration adopted by Jaswant Singh. The proposal of Kushal Singh and his associates was opposed by Udai Singh Champawat and Durjan Singh. Ajit Singh agreed to make the changes in the administration of Jalor. Udai Singh Champawat failed to maintain his position in the nobility and went over to the side of Mohkam Singh. The weak position of the king emboldened them to challenge even the king. The factional rivalry took another course. They didn't succeed in their scheme as Ajit Singh still enjoyed the support of the sardars belonging to the Champawat, the Kumpawat, the Udawat, the Mertia Rathores, and the other non-Rathore sardars.²⁸ Apart from the Rathore sardars there were a number of other sardars who came in support of Ajit Singh. They were Chauhan Chatur Singh, Shiv Singh, Rawat Gokuldas, Gobinddas, Fateh Singh and Bhagwandas, Purohit Rinmal Singh etc.

The Mughal authority was still strong enough for both the groups and on the intercession of the Mughal faujdar peace was concluded.²⁹ Durgadas also decided to return to Marwar as he was facing the attack from the imperial commander Afzal Khan. The sardars didn't like his return. But the Mughals could not establish their hold on Marwar. They allowed the Rathore sardars to live in their *thikanas* and they paid some lump-sum amount to the Mughal officials and continued with their old rights. Such arrangements gave them opportunity to turn these *patta* villages into their watan *jagirs*.

²⁸ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.185

²⁹ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.26

Taking advantage of the situation Ajit Singh occupied Jodhpur in 1707 and tried to revive the old administrative pattern. He decided to change the office of *Pradhan* who was the chief officer and was directly responsible to the Maharaja. In the absence of the rulers, the *pradhan* used to be the chief commander of the army also. The offices of desh-diwan and tan-diwan were considered second and third in the rank of the administrative hierarchy. During the time of Jaswant Singh reign the office of tan-diwan was created to curb the power of diwan. The other important office was that of Bakhshi. He was the head of the military department and the chief representative of the sardars. *Hakim* and *shiqdar* or *kotwal* were another important officers who enjoyed both civil and military powers. The *shiqdar* was another important functionary in the administration. In Marwar the term *shiqdar* was synonymous with the *kotwal* who was solely incharge of the town administration.

This annoyed a section of the nobility who changed their sides. Udai Singh and his followers defected to the side of Mohkam Singh. The defection of Udai Singh did not however change the attitude of any sizeable section of the Champawat sardars who were not prepared to break their traditional bonds with him. Ajit Singh recognized the importance of the Champawats by conferring the post of the *pradhan* on Mukand Das.³⁰ This led to a factional fight and the Mertia and Udawat sardars looked for an opportunity to oppose the Champawats. Ajit Singh tried to control the factional fight and offered the post of *pradhan* to Durgadas Rathore.

Durgadas Rathore not only refused the office but also refused to accept any *jagir* in Marwar. But he offered his services whenever required.³¹ The earlier actions of left

³⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.185

³¹ G.N. Sharma, 'Ajitoday and Glimpses of society and culture in Rajsthan', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1956, Vol.19. pp.283-290

him with very few followers in the nobility. The reason behind Durgadas's indifferent attitude lies in the internal situation prevailing in Marwar. The acceptance of the office of the *pradhan* would have annoyed Mukand Das who had held the office of the *pradhan* since the defection of Udai Singh Champawat and had considerable influence in state politics and among Champawat Rathores. It seems that there were other reasons as well which prompted Durgadas to take this action. Durgadas still had some influence at the Mughal court and he expected some favour from the new Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah. As Maharaja Ajit Singh had secured control over Jodhpur, without the permission of the emperor, Durgadas did not approve of it. To avoid getting involved in the affairs he decided to leave Marwar and settle down in his *jagir* in Mewar.

The factional fight didn't end even after Durgadas declined the offer of *pradhan ship*. Ajit Singh decided not to make any change in the position of Mukand Das Champawat who held this office. But this did not solve the problem. Some non Champawat sardars rebelled against Ajit Singh and tried to form a league against him. They also expected help from the Mughal emperor as he was annoyed with Ajit Singh. They proclaimed a bogus person Dalthambhan, the ruler of Jodhpur.³² To quell this outbreak Ajit Singh marched in person to Sojat and secured his control over it by ousting the Mughal faujdar who had extended support to the new ruler. Ajit Singh also faced challenge from Mohkam Singh, son of Indra Singh. After the occupation of Jodhpur by Ajit Singh, Mohkam Singh, who was holding charge of Merta went to the court of Bahadur Shah and revived the old claims of his family for

³² Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.30

the grant of Jodhpur. Having secured his control over Sojat, Ajit Singh decided to expel Mohkam Singh from Merta.

Ajit Singh did not send a nazar or even a message of congratulations to Bahadur Shah on the occasion of his accession to the throne. At the time of Aurangzeb's death, Ajit Singh was an imperial *mansabdar* and held Sojat in *jagir*. His occupation of Jodhpur without the permission of the emperor and his failure to send any nazar or presenting himself in the Mughal court was taken by the emperor as an act of defiance. Bahadur Shah decided upon a campaign to rectify the position. The news of Bahadur Shah's march towards Jodhpur created a serious problem for Ajit Singh. He was already facing the opposition of some of the Rathore sardars and Mohkam Singh. Under these circumstances Ajit Singh had no choice but to retain Mukand Das Champawat as *pradhan*.

The weak position of the king once again gave the nobles like Durgadas Rathore a chance to gain importance both in the politics of Marwar and the Mughals. The political situation gave him the opportunity to strengthen his position once again. Even Jai Singh wrote a letter to Durgadas Rathore after being dislodged from Amber and requested him to intercede on his behalf to the imperial authority. As has been discussed earlier he was given a *mansab* higher than Ajit Singh. He tried to bring about compromise between Ajit Singh and the emperor.³³ The emperor made enquiries about the *jagir* of Durgadas. Both Ajit Singh and Durgadas sent their petitions to the emperor in reply to a farman sent to them. That was an indication of submission on the part of Ajit Singh. Ajit Singh, along with Khan-i-Zaman reached the imperial camp in 1708 and was granted the *mansab* of 3500/3000 with the three Parganas Sojat, Siwana and Phalodi in *jagir*. At the same time Durgadas was also

³³ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.196

granted the *mansab* of 3000/3000 and Jalor in *jagir*.³⁴ The *mansab* granted to Durgadas Rathore was almost equal to that of the king. Thereafter he tried to maintain his independent status.

Challenges from the Nobility to the Ruler

These arrangements did not satisfy Ajit Singh who had expected that Jodhpur would be granted to him. Ajit Singh took the extraordinary step and fled away from the imperial camp. He combined with Maharana Amar Singh, Jai Singh, and Durgadas and they reoccupied Jodhpur.³⁵ During this period Durgadas Rathore remained with Maharaja Ajit Singh and Jai Singh, but he maintained his independent status. The factional fight among the nobles reached another level and at times there were conspiracies against the king also. The kings also at times became a party to these rivalries. Ajit Singh, after occupying Jodhpur for the second time made no changes in the official assignments and the office of the *pradhan* remained with Mukand Das and Raghunath Singh Champawat was appointed the *hakim* of Jodhpur.³⁶ These appointments were not to the liking of the Bhandaris and Rathore sardars. Champawat Mukand Das and his brother, Raghunath Singh were killed by Udawat Pratap Singh and Bhav Sabal Singhot. It is said that Ajit Singh also nursed an ill-will against Mukand Das because he held an imperial *mansab* and *thikana* Pali in *jagir*. From the contemporary accounts it is revealed that Mukand Das Champawat had conspired against Ajit Singh. The fact came to light when Bhandari Khivsi got hold of a letter written by Mukand Das Champawat to Mohkam Singh of Nagaur.³⁷ The letter

³⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.196

³⁵ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.374

³⁶ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.374

³⁷ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.375

indicated the exchange of correspondence between the two and conspiracy against the Maharaja.

Mukand Das planned to dislodge Ajit Singh from the gaddi of Jodhpur. He was under the impression that after the occupation of Jodhpur the emperor would favour Mohkam Singh and his own support would strengthen the imperial position at Sambhar. But Maharaja Ajit Singh could have never tolerated such an act of defiance. Earlier he had allowed Udai Singh Champawat to leave Sojat unharmed because of the latter's services to the cause of the Rathore rule in Marwar. The rebellion of Udai Singh Champawat did not enjoy the support of the Mughals. But in the case of Mukand Das, Ajit Singh had to take a strong measure as he could see the impending danger which could have engulfed him after the arrival of Bahadur Shah in Marwar. The popular discontent against Mukand Das also provided him a favourable opportunity to get rid of him. It is possible that like Jaswant Singh, Ajit Singh was also not in favour of keeping an imperial *mansabdar* as a *pradhan*. After the murder of Mukand Das Champawat, the office of the *pradhan* was entrusted to Bhandari Bithaldas who then held the office of desh-diwan.³⁸ But the Bhandaris could not maintain their monopoly on all these offices. Bhandari Bithaldas was imprisoned and in his place Rai Bhagwandas Champawat was appointed *pradhan* of Jodhpur. The appointment of another Champawat sardar after a gap of seven months was important, particularly when many Rathore sardars had expressed their resentment against the Champawats. By doing so Ajit Singh not only overlooked the claims of Bhandari Khivsi, the desh-diwan, but also rejected the possibility of the appointment of any other Rathore sardar. Rai Bhagwandas held a respectable position in the Rathore nobility. Although he enjoyed a *jagir* in Mewar, unlike Durgadas he remained in

³⁸ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.200

Marwar and continued his services under Ajit Singh. Thus his appointment hardly met any opposition from any the sardar. After the death of Bhagwandas Champawat the office of the *pradhan* was given to Bhandari Khivsi who remained in office till the death of Ajit Singh.³⁹ It may be noted that before assuming this office, Bhandari Khivsi had been working as tan-diwan. Thus the appointment of Bhandari Khivsi was considered on the basis of his capability. The *pradhans* remained the most powerful officers in the administration and politics during the reign of Ajit Singh. Bhagwandas Champawat and Bhandari Khivsi enjoyed full confidence of the Maharaja.

The *pradhan* was the chief officer and was directly responsible to the Maharaja. The office of the *pradhan* under the Rathore rule could be traced back to the time of Rao Chunda. Since then the *pradhan s* had worked as chief advisers to Rathore rulers. In the absence of the Rathore rulers, the *pradhan* used to be the chief commander of the army. When the Rathore rulers began to serve outside Marwar, the *pradhan* became the over-all incharge of the state in their absence. The diwan and the bakhshi took decision with the consultation of the *pradhan*. Orders as well as the *pattas* granted to the sardars were issued by the *pradhan* on behalf of the Maharaja.⁴⁰ Thus the *pradhan* held the highest rank in the official hierarchy. The *pradhan s* were given short tenures which shows that it was a part of the policy of the Raja whose interest lay in keeping full control over the pardhan who, being the highest officer, enjoyed all the administrative as well as military powers in the state. The offices of desh-diwan and tan-diwan were considered second and third in the rank of the administrative hierarchy. It was necessary to create a separate office in order to maintain an account of the claims of the *pattadars* and other officers related to the finance department of

³⁹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.380

⁴⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.202

the state. His work was interrelated with the function of the desh-diwan. The desh-diwan was not only incharge of the management of the state finance, but he also held the responsibility of the assignment of the *pattas* to the nobles and the general administration of the state. Whenever needed he also discharged the duties of a military commander. but the desh-diwan also enjoyed the position of offering suggestions on political and financial matters. He had the privilege of putting his seal upon farmans and other documents issued from his office.

In the absence of the Maharaja they were responsible for maintaining over-all supervision of the political and administrative affairs of the state. They entrusted the right of granting *patta* to the sardars on behalf of the Raja. They issued orders to the *hakims* or other sardars for military activities, whenever it became necessary. But they became more effective because of the continuous engagement of Ajit Singh in the politics of the Mughal court.⁴¹ Other important offices of the state administrative organisation were the offices of tan-diwan and desh-diwan.

A notable change in the position of other officers was that they were imprisoned for not making the payment to the state. As the Offices of tan-diwan and the desh-diwan managed the finances of the state, they were held Personally responsible if the realization was low. The office of the tan-diwan and desh-diwan remained with the Bhandaris. There are references to the payment of peshkash by desh diwan at the time of his appointment. Bhandari Bithaldas, was asked to pay to get himself released from prison. The imprisonment of the officers working as desh-diwan and tan-diwan was not unusual. During the time of Jaswant Singh also Muhnot Nainsi and Muhnot Sundardas were imprisoned and they were asked to pay a hefty amount to resume their posts. In the case of the diwans mentioned above, even after their imprisonment

⁴¹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.382

their services were not terminated and they resumed their office after making the payment demanded of them. Significantly, they were even promoted to higher posts.

Ajit Singh appointed *hakims* in all the Parganas of Marwar. The Bhandaris were appointed as *hakims* in almost all the Parganas of Manwar. A few of non Bhandaris were also appointed but on the recommendation of Bhandari Khivsi. After the occupation of Jodhpur, Bhandari sardars were appointed *hakims* of the Parganas of Merta, Jaitaran, Jodhpur and Jalor respectively.⁴² After the re-occupation of Jodhpur they continued in their respective places. The only exception were Muhnot Sangram Singh and Muhnot Sawal Singh who were non Bhandaris and held that office in the Parganas of Parbatsar and Jalor. But it may be noted that the appointment of these two Muhnot sardars was made on the recommendation of Bhandari Khivsi.

The office of the *shiqdar* and *bakshi* remained with non-Bhandaris and non-Rathore sardars. Some of these sardars like Sobhawat Dayaldas Vainidasot who was appointed *shiqdar* when Maharaja Ajit Singh occupied Jodhpur, became very powerful. He remained on that post till the death of Ajit Singh. His power was diminished a bit with the appointment of a powerful *Pradhan*. The *shiqdar* enjoyed unlimited powers and looked after the security arrangements of the city of Jodhpur. He was also responsible for implementing the orders of the Maharaja regarding the assignment of the *pattas* and other rights. The influence he wielded can be understood from the fact that when Bhandari Bithaldas and Bhandari Khivsi, the *pradhan* and the tan-diwan, were under imprisonment, he was instructed to release them only after realizing money in cash and not to free them if they delayed the payment. These references suggest that even in a state of political uncertainty, internal as well as external, *shiqdar* Dayaldas was enjoying a stable position and also the confidence of the Maharaja. From the above

⁴² Sharma, *Rajput*, p.204

account it is clear that the Rathore sardars failed to gain control of the various high State offices for which they had aspired after the removal of the Champawat sardars.

Group Rivalries within the Nobility

After the Champawats the Bhandaris gained the monopoly of all important state offices. Although before Ajit Singh, the Bhandaris had enjoyed the office of the *pradhan*, the diwan, the *hakim*, etc., they never held so many important posts at the same time. During the time of Jaswant Singh but these posts were mostly held by the Rathore or Bhati sardars. The Bhati sardars who since the time of Raja Udai Singh held a respectable position in the administration were also eliminated during Ajit Singh's reign. The Champawats lost their influence in the State administration. the Mertia, Udawat, Jaitawat and Jodha Rathore sardars, who formed the bulk of the Marwar nobility, hardly gained any advantage out of it. They remained out of State administration. The Muhnot sardars were again assigned administrative responsibilities. Since Muhnot Nainsi and Muhnot Sundardas had committed suicide, the members of the Muhnot family had been eliminated from the State services. On the recommendation of Bhandari Khivsi and Bhandari Raghunath, Muhnot Sangram Singh and Muhpot Sawaldas were appointed the *hakims* of the Parganas of Maroth-parbatsar and Jalor respectively.⁴³

The Rathore sardars and other sardars of various Rajput clans were eliminated from the state administration during the reign of Maharaja Ajit Singh which caused a serious political crisis in the politics of Marwar after his death. Although all important administrative offices remained in the hands of non-Rathore sardars, the position of the Rathore sardars in the Marwar nobility remained predominant. The number of the

⁴³ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.204

Rathore sardars was considerably higher than that of the non-Rathore sardars and others. Among the Rathore sardars, the Champawats held the highest Position in the nobility. This suggests that in spite of strong opposition the Position of the Champawat in the Marwar nobility remained intact. Among the non-Rathore sardars, the Bhatias and the Chauhans had an edge over the other non-Rathore sardars. In this respect a comparison with the nobility of the time of Jaswant Singh reveals that among the non-Rathore sardars, the Bhatias and Chauhans retained their Position. The Kachbawahs who held third Position among the non-Rathore sardars were eliminated from Power during Ajit Singh's reign.⁴⁴ It seems that as the Kachhawah sardar, held their *pattas* only in the *jagirs* of Jaswant Singh Outside Marwar, they did not participate in Marwar war and consequently were excluded during Ajit Singh's time. But in the case of the Bhatias and Chauhans the situation was quite different. They had their *thikanas* and *bhom* in Marwar and served Ajit Singh during the time of adversity.

Ajit Singh started granting *pattas* to the Rathore sardars against their service leading to the restoration of the *pattadari* system prevailing during the time of Jaswant Singh. Earlier the system of *bhai-bant* was replaced by the *pattadari* system which led to the changes in the rights and position of the nobility. Accordingly the old relationship based on the concept of *bhai-bant* was replaced by a new relationship based upon hierarchy of ranks. The Rathore sardars had to accept certain obligations of service, and in lieu thereof, were granted *pattas*. Broadly, the *pattas* were of two types *chakari-ka-patta*, and *gair-chakari-ka-patta*.⁴⁵ The *pattas* were granted under some specific conditions. The *pattadars* were obliged to render military service, within and

⁴⁴ Arha, 'Rival parties in Eighteen century, *Proceedings*, pp.371-76.

⁴⁵ Sharma, Some land revenue, *Proceedings*, pp.288-292.

outside Marwar. The number of followers and horsemen to be maintained depended upon the amount of salary and the rank of the *pattadars*. At the time of assignment, the grantees were required to pay a lump sum amount as peshkash. He was granted the land revenue of the territory mentioned in the *patta*. In some of the *pattas* mention is made of the right of ghasmari and bab along with land revenue. It is obvious that the *pattadar* held the right of collection of mal, and the right of ghasmari and other taxes given additionally. Thus, it is implied that the claim of the *pattadar* was strictly limited to the land revenue of the assigned village and this fact was specifically stated in the *patta*. It also implied that the *pattadar* could not claim any right or title to the land in village or villages granted to him. In such a category of assignment the *pattadar* was entitled to the collection of land revenue from the Peasants in his jurisdiction, but he was not the owner of the land. The ownership and the right of riaya remained undisturbed and they paid the state demand to the village officials who in their turn deposited it with the *hakim*. This was an important change in the nature of the *pattas*, in comparison to the *pattas* granted to the Rathore sardars earlier.

The transferable *pattas* were known as pher-badal-ra-*patta*.⁴⁶ In such *pattas* the amount of the *patta* remained the same but the possession over the villages was subject to change. The principle of transfer was not implemented strictly. The *pattas* remained with the grantee as long as he was in the state service or till his death. After the death of the grantee it depended on the will of the ruler to bestow the same *patta* upon the son of the deceased or not. As the amount of *patta* was determined on the basis of one's salary claim it was not necessary that while granting the *patta* to the son of the deceased he should get the same amount or the *patta* or the villages which his predecessor held. The worth of *patta*, whether higher or lower, depended upon the

⁴⁶ Sharma, Some land revenue, *Proceedings*, pp.288-292.

status of the grantee. The assignment could also be made in altogether different Parganas. Thus these *pattas* were not hereditary and could be taken into khalisa or transferred to any other *pattadar*. It is noteworthy that even within Marwar the grantee was not given the villages in one tappa.⁴⁷ Some time these villages could be scattered over different tappas or Parganas. Such a practice was restored in order to keep control over the sardars. For internal stability the earlier arrangement of *bhai-bant* provided an opportunity to the nobles to function independently and to claim hereditary rights. The power of transfer was an important tool in the hands of the ruler to keep the nobility under control.

The introduction of *pattadari* system reduced the territorial claim of the *thikanadars*. The system of *bhai-bant* provided an opportunity to various Rathore princes or sardars belonging to the various Rathore or non-Rathore clans to maintain hereditary claims over their respective territories. It may be noted that the territorial claim of these various Rathore or non-Rathore sardars was recognized over the areas which had been conquered by their ancestors. Their respective territories were known after a capital town or village where they kept their families (*basi*). These were also known *thikanas* and the possessors of these *thikanas* were known as *thikanadars*.

The sardars who were holding *pattas* since the time of Jaswant Singh, their *pattas* were recognized as watan *jagirs* by the emperor. Those who were either paying the land revenue to the Mughal officers or were engaged in the Mughal service were granted the right of realizing land revenue of their respective *patta* lands by the Mughal emperor.⁴⁸ After securing Possession over Jodhpur and other Parganas Ajit Singh took a stern attitude towards the sardars who had not Supported his cause

⁴⁷ The *pattas* mentioned in the Hukumat-Bahi clearly indicate the practice of assigning *patta*-villages in different Parganas.

⁴⁸ Sharma, Some land revenue, *Proceedings*, pp.288-292.

during the period of adversity. Many of the Rathore sardars who had not joined the service of Ajit Singh were deprived of their *thikanas* as well as *patta* land.⁴⁹ But in most of the cases after the confiscation of the *patta* or the *thikanas* it was granted to a sardar belonging to the same family. Thus the clan rights over their *pattas* were in general recognized by the state. Many of the *pattas* granted during the time of Ajit Singh are available and their study indicates the nature of rights and obligations of the *pattadars*. The *pattadars* were given the *pattas* on the condition that they would serve with loyalty wherever they were sent and would not put forth any fresh demands. They were forbidden to assign saran or doll out of the village without permission and to establish relations with others. The practice of the transfer of the *pattas* was continued by Ajit Singh. The *patta* villages of a grantee were not centered at one place, but were scattered over various tappas or Parganas. The *pattadar* was granted the land revenue of the area indicated in the *patta* and no additional claim could be inferred. The grant of the right to collect any other tax or cess was indicated in the *patta*. As before, the *pattadar* was obliged to maintain the specific number of horses and footmen.

Ajit Singh started collecting a lump-sum amount known as tagirat-bal from the *pattadars* along with the amount of peshkash or hukamnama. from the raiyats of the *jagirdars*. Initially this tax was levied during the period of adversity but later it was made permanent.⁵⁰ The raiyat used to pay a lump-sum amount to the Raja. This nominal help came to be called as tagirat or help rendered during the period of adversity. This tagirat was a sort of extra tax paid to the Maharaja or the *pattadars* in addition to the ordinary revenue to the Mughals. It seems that the purpose behind the

⁴⁹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.385

⁵⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.208

payment of tagirat-bal was to maintain the right over their land when the condition changed. At the same time the raiyat had an advantage too. Keeping in mind the income from this source the Rathore army did not plunder their territory. Later tagirat-bal was made permanent and added to the amount of hukamnama and was recovered with the hukamnama. As the *patta* was granted in lieu of the service, the grantee held the *patta* as long as he remained employed in the state service. When the *patradar* was removed from the service his *patta* was also cancelled. At times on confiscation of the *patta* villages, the Raja could permit the *pattadar* to retain a few fields just to save him from becoming homeless and destitute. Such territory was known as *juni-jagir*.⁵¹ Ajit Singh cancelled the *pattas* of those Rathore sardars who did not serve him during the period of his adversity. *Pattas* were also cancelled on failure to render the stipulated service or for some other similar reasons. The assignment of the *juni jagir* was made when the grantee was divested of his *patta*. The grant of *juni jagir* was a sort of subsistence allowance for the family of the old *pattadars*, although the state was not obliged to assign such *jagirs* to all the sardars whose *pattas* were confiscated. A study of the extracts of the *bhom* grants of the period of Ajit Singh reveals that most of the *bhoms* were granted to those sardars who had fought in favour of Ajit Singh during the period of instability. *Bhoms* were also granted to the sons of those sardars who died in a battle. The contents of the *parwana* indicate that in 1717 the state prohibited many of the cesses which were levied on the cultivators. These were the cesses which were paid to the *kanwaris* and other village officials. It appears that these officials collected the *gughari* and other cesses for their own expenses, although the state had collected the extra cesses for their expenses from the cultivators.

⁵¹ Jodhpur Administrative Report, 1883, as quoted in Sharma, *Rajput*, p.212

Under such a practice the amount paid by the cultivators was double than what they actually had to pay. It seems that the practice of the collection of these unauthorized cesses was not abandoned during the early half of Ajit Singh's reign. It may be noted that the same situation had prevailed during the early years of Jaswant Singh's reign and only later in 1657 these practices were stopped by introducing new rules.

No changes were made in the dastur of qanungo and kanwaris. It is mentioned that the izaaj made on various articles, if paid regularly, was to remain the same. Although no specific reference is made about the period whose rates were followed, it seems that the rates of cesses as fixed during the time of Jaswant Singh were accepted.⁵²

References to the latai and kankut make it obvious that both were prevailing as methods of realizing land revenue of the state. However, no specific mention is made regarding the nature of the land revenue demand. The contents of the parwana suggest that the rates of various cesses remained as before and only those practices were checked which were illegal. It seems the land revenue demand was also the same as it prevailed during the time of Jaswant Singh.

The position of the nobles reached another level when they played an important role in intervening in the war of succession and deciding the successors. Raghunath Bhandari who was at Delhi played a crucial role in the decision of the Mughal emperor who favoured Abhay Singh as the new ruler.⁵³ The Mughal emperor, Muhammad Shah, put the tika on the forehead of Abhay Singh conferring on him the gaddi of Jodhpur. The Parganas granted to Abhay Singh included Nagaur, Kekari, Ghatiali, Maroth, Parbatsar, Phulia, etc., which had earlier been taken into khalisa. After his arrival at Jodhpur Abhay Singh imprisoned Bhandari Raghunath and

⁵² Sharma, *Rajput*, p.212

⁵³ Arha, *Rival parties in Eighteen century*, *Proceedings*, pp 371-76.

Bhandari Khivsi in order to please the Rathore sardars. But Abhay Singh did not make any other change in the administrative set-up except the removal of Khivsi Bhandari from the office of *pradhan* and installing Champawat Maha Singh Bhagwandasot in his place. Champawat Maha Singh, Muhata Gokuldas, Pancholi Ram Kishan, Purohit Rinchhod, Bhandari Anoop Singh Raghunathot, Bhandari Manroop Pemsiaawat and Dayaldas Sobhawat were appointed as *pradhan*, diwan, bakhshi, khansama, *hakim* at Jodhpur, *hakim* at Merta, and *shiqdar* respectively.⁵⁴ These appointments make it clear that Abhay Singh was not prepared to throw the Bhandaris completely out of his administration because like his predecessors he was not ready to entrust all the administrative powers into the hands of his own clansmen. This policy had a political advantage the non-Rathore sardars were completely dependent upon the good-will of the Maharaja. Abhay Singh re-appointed Bhandari Raghunath to the office of diwan but he could remain in office for a short duration only and in his place Bhandari Rai Khivsi was appointed as diwan.

The factional conflict among the nobility became even sharper. The tension between the Rathore sardars and others like Bhandari, Singhvi, Muhnot, Mehta etc. grew. The non Rathore sardars were given important positions by different rulers even outside Marwar. Ajit Singh had appointed Bhandari Anup Singh as the Naib-subedar when he was made the governor of Gujarat. Abhay Singh continued with that and made Bhandari Ratan Singh the Naib-subedar of Gujarat. Different factions of the nobility supported different claimants. Rai Singh and Anand Singh were supported by some of the Jaitawat and Kumpawat Rathores.

The rulers on their part sided with one or the other group much to the dissatisfaction and discontent of the rival group. This had become necessary as his own position was

⁵⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.254

not so very strong now and they were facing multiple challenges. Abhay Singh decided to marry the daughter of Jai Singh despite the strong advice of the Rathore sardars. Many of the Marwar sardars accompanying Abhay Singh were not in favour of this alliance and advised him to go to Jodhpur first. Abhay Singh, however, did not agree. The result was that a large number of the sardars deserted him, and returned to their *thikanas*. The refusal to accept the advice of Rathore sardars by Abhay Singh with regard to his marriage at Mathura displeased the Rathore sardars who were with him on his way to Marwar. Among them were Champawats, Kumpawats, Jaitawats, Karnots, Mertias, Jodhas, Udawats, Karmsot and Bhandaris. When these Rathore sardars reached Marwar, they found a favourable situation caused by the revolt of Anand Singh and Rai Singh, and the support of the Rathore sardars in their favour. In fact, even before the defection on the marriage issue of the sardars accompanying Abhay Singh, the trouble had already started in Marwar. The marriage was performed with a view to strengthening Abhay Singh's position in Marwar. These nobles were now in a position to challenge the ruler and the ruler and Abhay Singh was trying to gain strength to tackle the nobles. This was the situation when he had been given the *tika* by the Emperor and there was no dispute to his claim.

The other group supported the decision. The rivalry reached a violent level when Bakhat Singh issued orders to imprison the Bhandaris. The Rathores took advantage of the situation and killed some of the Bhandari nobles. The support of the ruler emboldened them to the extent that they confronted the ruler and justified their actions when he inquired about a incident of murder.⁵⁵ The factional rivalry entered another level. Abhay Singh had to put Raghunath Bhandari under house arrest to

⁵⁵ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.254

conciliate the other group. The entry of the Marathas compelled them to keep the nobility in good humour.

Most of the Rathore sardars joined hands with prince Anand Singh. Almost all the Rathore sardars deserted the Bhandaris and imprisoned their officers Manroop and Dhanroop. The rebellious Rathore sardars under the banner of Anand Singh secured their control over Pargana Jaitaran; they were also expanding their influence over Merta. The rebellious Rathores made the Bhandaris their target. During Ajit Singh's reign the Bhandaris were exercising control over almost all the higher administrative posts. At the time of Ajit Singh's death also, the offices of the pardhan and the diwan were held by Khivsi Bhandari and Raghunath Bhandari respectively. At Jodhpur, Merta, Sojat and Jaitaran the office of the *hakim* was also in the hands of the Bhandaris. So the Rathore sardars had a general complaint against the Bhandaris. In the new power structure Rathore sardars were deprived of their earlier position. The rebellious Rathores could be conciliated if they were granted suitable *pattas* but this suggestion was not considered due to the influence of the Bhandaris. The Rathore sardars who had left Abhay Singh took up the cause of Rai Singh and Anand Singh to form an opposition against the Bhandaris.

The rival faction got an opportunity to side with the Marathas to settle score with the king. Many a times it was the deftness of the nobles which saved the situation for the kings. Bhandari Khinvsī saved the situation when he prevailed over the Marathas and persuaded them to leave Marwar when Anand Singh and Rai Singh had invited the Maratha generals Kanthji Dabhade and Peeluji Gaikwār.⁵⁶ In the same manner Raghunath Bhandari played a crucial role when Jai Singh planned an attack on

⁵⁶ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.254

Marwar. He used his good relations with Jai Singh which was built when Jai Singh had taken refuge at Jodhpur out of fear of the Saiyyid brothers during the time Ajit Singh. Raghunatah Bhandari treated Jai Singh so well that he promised that he would return the favour later. Raghuath Bhandari was taken out of house arrest with full dignity. After negotiations he prevailed upon Jai Singh and the impending danger could be avoided.⁵⁷

Jai Singh made sub-assignments and subleases in order to extend his watan. It was also done through acquisition of tankhawah *jagirs* and *ijaras*. The assignees were selected either from his own clan or from reputed people of other areas. Later the areas under the Khalsa increased and the areas under assignment

Jagir assignments were generally of three types- Tankhwah *Jagir*, Ghar Baitha ki *Jagir* and Miscellaneous.⁵⁸ The tankhwah *Jagir* was the most usual form of assignment. Ghar baitha ki *Jagir* was granted to those who had rendered outstanding service to the state. The holders of tankhwah *Jagir* had to maintain a number of contingent and his salary was fixed upon the size of contingent he maintained. There was no *mansab* or grading of *Jagirdars*. The *Jagirdar* earned his income from his *Jagir* mainly by land revenue collections. His share ranged from one half to one-sixth of the produce in different places. The *Jagirdar* was entitled to a talab (claim) in case the actual collection was less than the standard assessment. In such cases the deficit was either compensated by a cash payment from the state treasury or by an additional *Jagir*. The assignee was also entitled for a takhfif (reduction).⁵⁹ The Tankhawah

⁵⁷ Arha, Rival parties in Eighteen century, *Proceedings*, pp 371-76.

⁵⁸ S.P Gupta, 'The *Jagir* System and the evolution of Jaipur State(1650-1750)', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1974, Vol. pp.171-179

⁵⁹ Gupta, The *Jagir* System, *Proceedings*, pp.171-179

Jagirs were always subject to renewal and each year the sanad had to be shown for inspection failing which there would be confiscation of the *Jagir*.

There was an undercurrent of tussle between the Jaipur rajas and the *Jagirdars*. The Rajas emphasised that the *jagirdars* tenure depended on service and loyalty where as the *Jagirdars* claimed their tenure by right of heredity. The service conditions of the *Jagirdars* reduced many of the bigger chieftains (territorial thikandar) to the position of *Jagirdars*.

A comparative list of the Rathore and non Rathore sardars during the time of Ajit Singh and Abhya Singh is as follows;

During the time of Ajit Singh;⁶⁰

Paragana	Rathores	Highest/Lowest % of rekh
Jodhpur	Jodhpur/Jaitanwab	5.11/0.07
Sojat	Kumpawats/Jodhpur	2.85/0.35
Jalore	Champawats/Karmost	1.27/0.02
Medta	Medtias/Jaitawat	10.45/0.07

⁶⁰ R.K. Saxena, *Marwar under Ajit Singh and Abhay Singh*, Maharaja Man Singh Pustak Prakash Research Center, Mehrangarh fort, Jodhpur, 2017, p.18.

Non-Rathores

Jodhpur	Bhatis/Rathores	3.06/0.0086
Sojat	Non-Rathores/miscellaneous	0.47/0.10
Jalore	Chouhans/Rathores	0.48/0.02
Medta	Non-Rathores/Chouhans	0.82/0.14

During the time of Abhay Singh;⁶¹

Paragana	Rathores	Highest/Lowest % of rekh
Jodhpur	Champawaths/Medtias	5.19/0.30
Sojat	Champawats/Jodhpur	3.10/0.24
Ja*lore	Champawats/Others	1.88/0.07
Medta	Medtias/Jaitawat	10.45/0.10

⁶¹ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.30.

Non-Rathores

Jodhpur	Bhatis/Phatans	3.06/0.08
Sojat	Others/Bhatis	1.05/0.35
Jalore	Bhatias/Phatans	1.37/0.12
Medta	Others/Pathans	2.17/0.06

CHAPTER TWO

Pattadari and Jagirdari Systems in Rajasthan during the Early Eighteenth Century

Many changes occurred in the structure of the Rajput states during the first half of the 18th century. The Mughal empire which had started weakening didn't ensure any help to the Rajput kings. In the absence of that, they had to find out new ways to run their administration and many changes were introduced in the institutions of administration. The *Pattadari* and *Jagirdari* system on which the relationship between the ruler and the nobility was built, also underwent many changes. The services of the Rajput rulers were required more and more in the areas outside their watan. The rulers faced the challenge to take care of their watan while serving in the imperial areas. The declining imperial power made this even more challenging. Earlier they were sure of the help from the imperial authorities in times of crisis. This necessitated a new kind of functioning.

The concept of Bhai-bandh was prevalent in Marwar. According to this the territory conquered by the Rathore rulers or their sardars with the co-operative effort of the clan was considered to be a kind of joint state.¹ The Rathore sardars, by virtue of being the descendants of the Rathore rulers, proclaimed equal rights with the ruler. This relationship was based on the concept of Bhai-bandh and the rulers themselves allowed their family members to enjoy semi-independent status in their respective territories. This system of parcelling out the conquered territories among the princes and sardars was known as *bhai-bant*. The territories of Merta, Jaitaran, Siwana,

¹ Sharma, Concept of kingship, *Proceedings*, pp.157-165.

Phalodi, and Satalmer (Pohkaran) were held by the descendants of Rao Duba, Rathore Uda, Rao Bija, Rao Hamir and Rao Govind respectively in the beginning of the 16thc.²

The system of *Patta*

Patta means a written title or deed assigned or granted by a ruler to a single *asami* or sometimes a couple. The earlier *pattas* were simple assignments of land meant for the maintenance of the holder with an implied understanding that the grantee would be contributing in safeguarding the raj. These assignments were transferable and the revenue from it was termed as *rekh* which was an arbitrary assessed land revenue.³ The Rathore rulers had their own system of assessment which brought *rekh* figures much higher than the *jagir* statistics of the Mughals. *Rekh* sometimes fell short of salary (*tan*) against which it was given. The assignment against *rekh* carried villages, part of a village and even *bas* (residential place).⁴ The assignment of a *jagir* was not against service tenure and *jagirdar* was not a salaried person. The *Jagirdars* worked on voluntary basis and without any pay. The *jagirs*, as such, were not regarded *tan* but a share against the services rendered by a *pattayat* in bringing the raj as a living identity. The *jagirs* were unrevocable excepting when the doings of a *pattayat* challenged the interests of the raj. *Pattayats* took it as a holy duty to defend the raj against it. Under normal circumstances the *jagirs* were renewed as a routine affair.⁵

These sardars of various Rathore sub clans replaced the incumbent sardars who also belonged to the same clan. This was done forcefully by them. Sometimes he ruler also helped in this endeavour. This led to internal rivalry among the Rathore sardars, and

² Sharma, Concept of kingship, *Proceedings*, pp.157-165.

³ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.10

⁴ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.11

⁵ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.11

also conflict with the rulers. Gradually the defeated groups lost their position in the nobility and the new groups rose to the position. However, this mobility was confined to a very narrow circle. Under this system, the Rathore sardars had the political and moral obligation to support the ruler in the time of crisis. However, the political support could be secured only when the ruler was strong enough to assert his authority. These sardars could proclaim themselves independent under a weak ruler.

Rao Maldeo was the first Rathore ruler who realised the problems caused due to the concept of Bhai-bandh. He therefore asserted that the concept included the concept of Bhai-band-Chakar which implied the subordination of the Rathore sardars to the ruler. Maldeo dislodged the Rathore Sardars or princes who refused to serve under him. He asserted that a sardar was dependent for position on the goodwill of the Raja rather than on his inherent lights. To implement this principle Maldeo started the practice of assignment of the *pattas* (land revenue grants) to his sardars who were serving in his army. These *pattas* were assigned in the territory of Marwar as well as in the territories outside Marwar where Maldeo held his control. These assignees were not free to exercise their power independently under the new pattern. They were granted territories or *pattas* against which they had to perform certain obligations. However, the practice of granting *pattas* and territories made no specific changes in the character of the nobility. The nature of their holding was more permanent by virtue of their kinship ties and clan status in their respective territories.

After the death of Rao Maldeo, Marwar lost its independence and came under the control of the Mughals. The system of administration was reorganised according to the Mughal pattern. The old relationship based on the concept of kinship and brotherhood was replaced by a new relationship which was based upon a hierarchy of ranks. Sur Singh fixed the ranks of his kinsmen and converted their status to that of a

nobility of the Mughal type. Their status in the court was also determined. At the court they were divided into two wings, called *davi* and *jimani* or left and right. In the right wing were placed the descendents of Rao Rinmal and the headship of the wing was bestowed to the Champawats of Auwa. In the left wing were placed the descendents of Rao Jodha, and the headship of wing was bestowed to the Mertias of Ria.⁶ Rao Sur Singh also introduced some new elements in the *Jagirdari* system in the state and started assigning land revenue grants to the nobles for service to be rendered. Though the practice of grant of *pattas* was prevalent in Marwar it is difficult to determine the exact nature of the land revenue grants before the time of Raja Jaswant Singh.

The system of *bhai-bant* provided an opportunity to various Rathore princes or sardars belonging to the various Rathore or non-Rathore clans to maintain hereditary claims over their respective territories. The territorial claim of these sardars was recognized over the areas which had been conquered by their ancestors. These were known as *thikanas* and the possessors of these *thikanas* were known as *thikanadars*. The introduction of *pattadari* system reduced the territorial claim of these *thikanadars* and a part of his *patta* became transferable. The rule of primogeniture also was no longer followed but it remained within the family. A part of the *patta* was considered as the hereditary *thikana* but it was always granted in lieu of the salary. Although in theory the Rathore ruler could resume the right of a particular *thikanadar* over his *thikana* village, in practice the *thikana* village always remained with the members of the same family. It may be noted that these *thikanas* remained with the holder so long as they rendered service to the Raja. During Jaswant Singh's reign many sardars were granted *thikanas*. Rathore Askaran of *Pattawat* clan was given a village Mayakor as

⁶ Sharma, Some land revenue, *Proceedings*, pp.288-292.

thikana. Laxmidas Deorajot established a *thikana* and named it Kanedio. Rathore Sur Singh of Kumpawat clan established a *thikana* in Pargana Sojat in his own name and kept his household there.⁷ The grant of such *thikanas* was a reward to the grantee for his meritorious service to the state.

It was not essential that only inhabited villages should be granted in *thikana*. Waste lands could be assigned for the purpose of habitation, leading to the establishment of a *thikana*. In case of the *thikana* where the grantee was given land without habitation, the *thikanadar* had to invite the cultivators from neighbouring areas and populate the village. The grant of a *thikana* could also be made out of villages which were already under settlement. It may be noted that the *thikanadars* had to pay a fixed amount to the state or to the *pattadars* as the case may be. The annual consolidated amount paid by the *thikanadars* was known as *bhugat-bhog*. It appears that the amount was fixed after considering the services of the grantee and resources of the village. The state also granted a village or a part of it as *bhom* to the sardars. *Bhom* was hereditary landed estate held free of assessment; though the holder paid a fixed amount to the state. Rathore Hemraj, son of Rinmal, was given land in village Taleda of Pargana Merta. The territory granted in *bhom* was clearly defined. The local officials were instructed to measure the given area and demarcate it in a particular village or anywhere in a Pargana, as stated in the Pargana. The *pattadars* and revenue officials on their part were naturally anxious that the grantees should confine their right to the area of their grant and do not occupy area in excess of it.

Although the grant of *bhom* was considered to be a special favour of the state, the *bhomia* had to pay a fixed amount known as *bhom-bab* to the state. There was variations in the rates of the *bhom-bab*. In the areas where irrigation facilities were

⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.125

available, the rates of *bhom-bab* were higher in comparison to other areas where such facilities were not available. In those areas where the *bhomia* was asked to populate the area, the rates were considerably lower. Sometimes the *bhomia* was even exempted from the payment of *bhom-bab*. It seems that such exemption was made when the *bhomia* colonized the area at his own cost. The amount of the *bhom-bab* was fixed on the basis of geographical and economic resources of the area, though in all cases the rates of *bhom-bab* were fixed concessionally. The nature of the grant of the *thikana* and *bhom* shows that both the tenures signified similar rights. Such grants were given as *mundkati* or reward for showing valour in war or rendering other meritorious services.⁸ These were revenue free holdings but the retainee paid a rent known as *bhugat-bhog* or *bhom-bab*. These holdings were hereditary and the state did not interfere in their affairs as long as their conduct was satisfactory. Both *thikanadars* and *bhomias* were obliged to serve the state in suppressing dacoities and other crimes in their village and protect the travelers.

Another category of grant was *bhomi-chara-ra-gaon*. These villages were inhabited prior to the advent of Rathores by the Rajput families other than the Rathores. These Rajputs were later on known as *seerivi* Rajputs.⁹ They were the descendants of the subdued Rajput families and started cultivation later on. The *hasil* figures of these villages suggest that a fixed amount was paid to *pattadar*. The *bhomias* were obliged to perform the state service or to pay *peshkash* but the state failed to force the *bhomias* to render the service. As these villages were dominated by the members of the same family, it seems that the area was *zortlab*.

The *bhomia*, being the descendant of the first colonizer, had the right of realizing land revenue from the peasants and also the right of allotting the uncultivated area to the

⁸ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.126

⁹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.126

cultivators. Almost similar privileges were enjoyed by the leaders of subdued tribes, Mers and Meenas, who were recognized as *bhomias*. In Eastern Rajasthan some of the *bhomias* had the customary right to realize kori *bhomiki* from the traders passing through territories under their control. It was thus a customary levy and could be imposed by the *bhomias* who had been realizing it for long but practically all the *bhomias* collected it. In many cases the *bhomias* used coercive methods to compel the traders and banjaras to pass through territories held under their jurisdiction in order to exact kori *bhomi rahdari* ki.¹⁰

The *bhomi-chara* holdings represented the last remnants of the Rajput chiefs and the holdings of the tribal leaders whose families had been displaced in the struggle for supremacy. The defeated families retained or were allowed to retain certain villages as *bhom* holdings out of consideration by the new conqueror, and being the older settlers having hereditary rights they were looked upon with great respect. The *bhomi-chara* villages were looked upon with great respect. The *bhomi-chara* villages were different from the *bhom* land granted by the state. In case of the former, the Raja had to recognize the *bhom* rights of the descendants of the chiefs of the old families, but in case of the latter the Raja made a fresh grant to a sardar giving him a definite area in *bhom*.

The holder of the *thikana* was free to extend the area under the cultivation by inviting cultivators from the neighbouring areas. Thus the cultivated area under the *thikana* village could be extended. But the holders of *bhom* could not extend their holdings to the cultivated area beyond the land specified. The practice of the grant of the *thikanas* and *bhom* did not imply the emergence of any new class of nobility. In fact, it was not the replacement of the old by the new but a case of individual favour shown towards

¹⁰ Singh, Nature and Incidences of taxes, *Proceedings*, pp.311-326.

the members of the same family. At the same time it would be wrong to presume that the old hereditary *thikanadars* had lost their position or influence in the state politics. The Jaitawat, Kumpawat and Jodhawat Rathores remained in majority and retained their influence. The clan domination remained as before, but now their position depended on the wishes and whims of the Rathore rulers.

In the village where the peasants belonged to the family of the same clan, who held *bhom* rights, they enjoyed the khud-kasht rights. In those areas where the peasants engaged themselves in cultivation, the *bhomia* hardly interfered. He only realized his share from the peasants. Under these circumstances the proprietary right of the *bhomias* and peasants were interrelated. There is hardly any example to show that the *bhomia* had a right to take away the land from the peasants. Obviously, when large areas or wasteland remained still unploughed the main concern of a *bhomia*, in normal circumstances, was to keep his peasants rather than lose them. As these *bhoms* were granted by the Raja, the *bhomia* was also to look after the welfare of the peasantry. The term gair-chakari-ka-*patta* implied the grant against which the holder was not obliged to perform state service. It was also known as ghar-baitha-ri-*jagir*.¹¹ Such grants comprised the *pattas* which were given in badhara or Inam. If a sardar died fighting in the battle, a *patta* could be granted to his family for maintenance. This was known as jivika.¹² Although the holder of such grant was exempted from all taxes, any increase in the size of his holding made it obligatory for him to render the state service.

¹¹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.128

¹² Sharma, *Rajput*, p.128

Clan Ownership of the *Pattas*

The prevalence of the *pattadari* system does not imply that in the Rathore state the *pattadars* belonged to the Rathore clan only. The *pattas* granted to the sardars of various Rathore sub clans in various Parganas of Marwar shows that the Kumpawats in Pargana Jodhpur, Udawats in Pargana Jaitaran, Jaitawats in Pargana Sojat, *Pattawats* in Pargana Phalodi, Mertias in Pargana Merta, Narawats in Pargana Pokaran, Balawats in Pargana Siwana and Jodhas in Pargana Jalor had the largest holding. It may be noted that although the Rathore sardars of Kumpawat clan held the largest area in *pattas* in Jodhpur, their position in other Parganas was not the same. It may also be noted that Rathore sardars belonging to a sub-clan did not possess the largest numbers of *pattas* in other Pargana at a time. This suggests that there could be one dominant clan in two Parganas. It seems that in the interest of the state a balance among the various clans of nobility was maintained. This can be supported by the fact that, as mentioned above, the holdings of a sardar were not centralized either in one tappa or Pargana. Thus the provision of daro-bast-*jagir* was avoided to eliminate the possible hereditary claim of *pattadars*.¹³ To avoid any challenge to one another several clans in a Pargana were granted *jagirs* so that they can keep an eye on the activities of other clans and thus counter balance one another. Clan-rivalry was one of the basic characteristics of this polity and the rulers employed it for the safety of the raj.¹⁴

Similarly, another important Rathore sub-clan, Mertia, also held only one *patta*. This suggests that the old Rathore families enjoyed the dominating position in the ruling class. Among the non-Rathore sardars who formed part of the Marwar nobility were

¹³ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.130

¹⁴ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.10

Panwars, Solankis, Chauhans, Kachhawahs, Parihars, Gahilots, Tanwars and Bhatias who belonged to the various Rajput clans. Obviously, these numbers were negligible in comparison to the number of the Rathore sardars, the Rajputs of Bhati clan held the highest place.

The clans which held high position in the nobility maintained their superiority over other Rajput sardars. The total amount granted to other non-Rathore sardars was also very low. Thus the Rathore sardars held the highest revenue in both the categories. Like *patta* villages, *thikanas* were granted in different villages to the members of a particular khamp. Thus we find that the *thikanas* of Jaitawat Rathores were scattered in the Parganas of Jodhpur, Jaswantpura, Jalor, Sojat and Siwana. Similarly, the Kumpawats were holding the *thikanas* in the Parganas of Merta, Jodhpur, Nagaur, Jalor and Sojat.¹⁵ Although, excepting those of the Chauhan *thikanadars*, it may be said that the same practice was adopted in the case of non-Rathore sardars also. The sardars who were granted the *pattas* were not only obliged to render military service but they could also be given administrative assignments. In the state, the *pradhan* was the chief officer and was directly responsible to the Maharaja.¹⁶

There was absence of quality horses in the Rathore principality which made them foot-soldiers alone. It is because of this that Muslamans branded them 'Rajputi (Rajput) knowing how to die than how to fight.'¹⁷ During the reign of Abhay Singh the Turki and Tazi breed of horses were imported as the warfare had become cavalry oriented. Accordingly the Chakri obligations began to be set against certain parameters for a sawar trooper, camel sawar and foot-man carrying Rs. rekh 1000, 700 and 500 respectively. As such *jagirs* were supposed to be charkri-oriented but one

¹⁵ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.10

¹⁶ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.

¹⁷ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.11

barely finds chakri content in the Bahi. Out of a total of 1897.5 *jagirs* chakri has been mentioned in only 18 instances (0.94%). It has been mentioned in terms of cavalry trooper which was the characteristic feature of 18th Century.¹⁸

In the absence of the Rathore rulers, the *pradhan* used to be the chief commander of the army. After the acceptance of the suzerainty of the Mughals, the Rathore rulers began to serve outside Marwar and the *pradhan* became the over-all incharge of the state in their absence. The diwan and the bakhshi took decision with the consultation of the *pradhan*. Orders as well as the *pattas* granted to the sardars were issued by the *pradhan* on behalf of the Maharaja. Thus the *pradhan* held the highest rank in the official hierarchy of the Marwar state. Raj Singh Kumpawat was given the office of *pradhan* at the time of the accession of Jaswant Singh. After his death in Maheshdas Surajmalot of Champawat branch was appointed as *pradhan*. Soon he was also removed from the office of *pradhan* and in his place Gopaldas Sunderasot of Mertia branch was appointed as *pradhan*.¹⁹ It may be noted that Gopaldas was not holding any imperial *mansab* and his post as the wakil of Jodhpur in the Mughal court had also ceased. It was felt that would not be possible for him to discharge his duty as *pradhan* while living at the Mughal court. Thus it is apparent that no *pradhan* enjoyed the office for a long time. As soon as the Raja felt the necessity of the removal of *pradhan* he acted with impunity. It is clear that the post was neither hereditary nor confined to the members of a particular branch of the Rathore clan.

The appointment of Prithi Singh Bhati, son of Govinddas Bhati, who enjoyed the office of *pradhan* during the reign of Maharaja Sur Singh, suggests that the office of the *pradhan* was not exclusively for the Rathore sardars. Non-Rathore sardars were

¹⁸ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.11

¹⁹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.132

also appointed for this office frequently.²⁰ It may be noted that the person who was appointed on the post generally used to have an experience of the office of the diwan and the *hakim*. This suggests that due consideration was given to the merit of the person, although a study of the social and political background of the persons appointed on this post reveals that each of them belonged to the privileged group of the nobility.

The short tenure of these *pradhan s* shows that it was a part of the policy of the Raja whose interest lay in keeping full control over the *pradhan* who, being the highest officer, enjoyed all the administrative as well as military powers in the state. There is no instance to suggest that after removal from the post of *pradhan* the retaineer enjoyed any other post or the *patta* in Marwar. Generally, the accepted the imperial service and thus became the *mansabdar* of the Mughal court. As soon as a *pradhan* joined the imperial service his *patta* holdings were taken into *khalisa*. The offices of *desh-diwan* and *tan-diwan* were considered second and third in the rank of the administrative hierarchy. It may be noted that prior to Jaswant Singh's reign the office of *tan-diwan* was created to curb the power of *diwan*. Moreover, it was necessary to create a separate office in order to maintain an account of the claims of the *pattadars* and other officers related to the finance department of the state. His work was interrelated with the function of the *desh-diwan*.

The *desh-diwan* was not only incharge of the management of the state finance, but he also held the responsibility of the assignment of the *pattas* to the nobles and the general administration of the state.²¹ Whenever needed he also discharged the duties of a military commander. A study of the inner working of the office of *desh-diwan*

²⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.132

²¹ Bhatt and Dadhich, *Ajitodaya*, p.

reveals that the desh-diwan held a higher position than the tan-diwan but the latter cannot be taken as his subordinate. In the darbar of the Raja both of them had the right to appear and put matters related to their duties before the Raja, but the desh-diwan also enjoyed the position of offering suggestions on political and financial matters. He had the privilege of putting his seal upon farmans and other documents issued from his office. Sukhmal Subhawati Singhvi was desh-diwan when Gaj Singh died. He continued in office when Jaswant Singh ascended the throne. After his death Pratapmal Singhvi assumed the office of desh-diwan, but later on he was given the post of *hakim* of Merta and in his place Miyan Farasat was appointed as desh-diwan.²² Muhnot Nainsi was appointed desh-diwan who remained in this office till 1666. Raghunath Singh Bhati was then appointed on that post who remained till Jodhpur was taken into khalisa after the death of Jaswant Singh. Thus like the post of the *pradhan*, the office of the diwans was also assigned only to such person, who had prior administrative experience. Significantly, the offices of the diwans always remained with the non-Rathore sardars. Among the desh-diwans appointed during that period, one was Muslim, one was Bhati Rajput and the rest belonged to the vaishya community.²³ The appointment of Miyan Farasat, Muhnot Nainsi and Sundardas nainsi and Bhati Raghunath, indicates that professional qualification in the matters of finance was an important factor in the appointment of desh-diwan and tan-diwan. During the tenure of Miyan Farasat many changes were made in the field of revenue administration. These changes were given definite shape during the tenure of Muhnot Nainsi who worked hard to reform the land revenue machinery. A significant feature which appeared during Jaswant Singh's reign was the introduction of the practice of peshkash for the office of the desh-diwan. This is apparent in relation to Muhnot

²² Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.386

²³ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.386

Nainsi and his brother Sudner das who were imprisoned on the ground that they failed to deposit the peshkash as demanded by the Raja. It may be noted that the demand was made when they were working on the posts of the desh-diwan and tan-diwan respectively. Although, the reason of the demand has not been mentioned in any of the contemporary works, it can be presumed that the office of diwan had become a source of profit and, therefore, they were required to pay the amount of peshkash to atone for the profit they had gained. It may be noted that as the office of desh-diwan dealt with all the revenue matters and decided the assignments to the *pattadars*, the malpractices should have become common. The peshkash was demanded not only for the security but also to make up the balance recovered from the diwan.

The other officer of an equal rank was bakhshi. The office of bakhshi had been very much in existence since the time of Raja Sur Singh. In the administration of Marwar the bakhshi was an official of high rank. He was the head of the military department, and, as such the chief representative of the sardars. It seems that the function of the bakhshi in Marwar was very much similar to that of the imperial mir-bakhshi under the Mughals. Thus he was well acquainted with the family background of all the sardars and the *pattas* they held.²⁴ All orders related to the assignments of the *pattas* and the appointments to the high officers of the state, such as *hakim*, *amin*, *shiqdar* or *kotwal*, etc., passed through the bakhshi. The bakhshi was responsible to forward it to the diwan after indicating the amount of the *patta* and fixing the number of the sawar or footmen according to the rule of the state. Although bakhshi was head of the military department, a study of the various campaigns that took place during the time of Jaswant Singh shows that his position did not give him any supremacy in the

²⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.134

army.²⁵ He was not the supreme commander of the state army nor was he entitled to lead on expedition by virtue of his post. It was at the discretion of the Raja to make suitable arrangements according to the nature of the expedition and take decision about the composition of the army and the generals to be selected. Thus we find that in an army sent against Jaisalmer, Muhnot Nainsi was given the command of that army, which he was maintaining while he held the office of the *hakim* at Phalodi. Apparently, on both the occasions, the command of the army was not given to the bakhshi, but to a person of Raja's choice. It seems that the function of the bakhshi in Marwar was very much similar to that of the imperial mir-bakhshi under the Mughals. But in the absence of the names of the bakhshi serving Jaswant Singh's reign, it may be assumed that only one person might have served during this period. Thus, like the mir-bakhshi of the imperial court, the office of bakhshi was not subject to frequent changes.

Another important office to be mentioned was *hakim* and *shiqdar* or *kotwal*. As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, the *hakim* was in charge of the Pargana and enjoyed both civil and military powers. A study of the appointments made during the time of Jaswant Singth reveals that considering a person for the office of *hakim* the merits of the individual weighed high and that his family antecedents were a secondary factor.

The *shiqdar* was solely incharge of the town administration. The appointment of *shiqdar* was made by the Raja with the consultation of the *pradhan* and the desh-diwan.²⁶ Although he had to follow the orders of the *hakims* in his Pargana, he was directly responsible to the Raja. The primary duty of the *shiqdar* was to adopt security

²⁵ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.135

²⁶ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.135

measures for the welfare of the town. He kept an eye on the activities of the people and noted the details about every person coming in and going out of the city. He was answerable for all the thefts and other crimes committed within the town and if he failed to stop them he had to make good the loss. Beside these police duties, the *shiqdar* had to supervise over the market arrangements and was responsible for the collection of the state dues in the town and its vicinity. Whenever a person died without leaving a male issue, the decision was taken on the basis of the enquiry of the *shiqdar*. Thus the office of the *shiqdar* was similar to the office of the *kotwal* of the Mughal Empire. During the time Maharaja Gaj Singh, the office of the *shiqdar* was held by Radhudas, son of Kumbhkaran of Champawat Rathore clan.²⁷ We do not have the names of the *shiqdars* of the time of Jaswant Singh. The reference that Radhudas held the *patta* during Jaswant Singh's reign suggests that he held the same office till his death. The account of the time of Ajit Singh reveals that Shobhawat Dayaldas of Mewrtia clan held the office of *shiqdar* of Jodhpur. It is clear that Radhudas worked as *shiqdar* during the time of Gaj Singh and Jaswant Singh till the latter's death. During Ajit Singh's reign the office was held by Shobhawat Dayaldas of Mertia clan. This suggests that office of the *shiqdar* was permanent and the office appointed on this post continued till his death. Although it was not hereditary, as we have seen that the abovementioned *shiqdar* belonged to the Champawat and the Mertia clans of the Rathores, it remained in the possession of the Rathore sardars.

Despite the majority of the Rathore sardars in the Mewar nobility, the administrative arrangements were not exclusive in their hands. Non-Rathore sardars were treated equally and enjoyed the highest administrative positions. Significantly, while the offices of *pradhan* and the *hakims* of the Parganas remained mostly in the hands of

²⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.135

the Rathore and non-Rathore sardars, the offices of the diwans always remained in the hands of non-Rathore sardars particularly those who belonged to the Vaishya community. This was perhaps to discourage the retention of the offices of both the *pradhan* and diwan by Rathore sardars. But an equally important factor behind the appointment of the diwans was their experience in the field of revenue administration.

Changes in the *Pattadari* System

Ajit Singh started granting *pattas* to the Rathore sardars against their service leading to the restoration of the *pattadari* system prevailing during the time of Jaswant Singh. Earlier the system of *bhai-bant* was replaced by the *pattadari* system which led to the changes in the rights and position of the nobility. Accordingly the old relationship based on the concept of *bhai-bant* was replaced by a new relationship based upon hierarchy of ranks. The Rathore sardars had to accept certain obligations of service, and in lieu thereof, were granted *pattas*. Broadly, the *pattas* were of two types *chakari-ka-patta*, and *gair-chakari-ka-patta*. The *pattas* were granted under some specific conditions. The *pattadars* were obliged to render military service, within and outside Marwar. The number of followers and horsemen to be maintained depended upon the amount of salary and the rank of the *pattadars*. At the time of assignment of *patta*, the information was sent, along with the copy of *patta*, to the local officials clearly stating the precise rights and obligations of the *pattadars*. The grantee had to maintain a horse on every thousand rekh, although in some cases such a rule was not observed when other obligations were also imposed. It seems that the rule was strictly implemented in a particular situation but could be relaxed with the changing circumstances. Apart from the horse or horses, the *pattadar* had to maintain camels and the foot soldiers. At the time of assignment, the grantees were required to pay a lump sum amount as peshkash. The practice of realizing peshkash started during the

time of Mota Raja Uday Singh which was purely a Mughal impact. The *pattayats* were to pay the peshkash which were mostly in cash. Sometimes peshkash was bifurcated when the *Pattayat* was not to pay in one go. The payment of the peshkash varied according to the clans.²⁸ He was granted the land revenue of the territory mentioned in the *patta*. The *pattadars* were not expected to render service within Marwar alone but they could be asked to serve outside Marwar also. In the *pattas* this was specifically mentioned that the *pattadars* would not make any objection in serving within or outside Marwar. The condition of service outside Marwar was made compulsory due to the obligations of the Rathore ruler towards the Mughal state. The Rathore ruler needed the services of the sardars not only to keep his contingent whenever he had to serve outside Marwar, but also to maintain his control over the *jagirs* granted to him. Whenever a *pattadar* was required to serve in the *jagir* of the Maharaja granted by the Mughal emperor outside his watan *jagir*, the necessary increment was made in the salary of the *pattadar*. The increased amount was covered by assigning to him an additional *jagir* of the same amount within Marwar or outside Marwar where the grantee was posted. In case the state failed to assign to him any *jagir* the amount was paid in cash.²⁹ The rights of the grantee were specifically indicated in the *patta* during the time of Ajit Singh.

In some of the *pattas* mention is made of the right of ghasmari and bab along with land revenue. It is obvious that the *pattadar* held the right of collection of mal, and the right of ghasmari and other taxes given additionally. Thus, it is implied that the claim of the *pattadar* was strictly limited to the land revenue of the assigned village and this fact was specifically stated in the *patta*. It also implied that the *pattadar* could not

²⁸ Saxena, *Marwar*, p.15

²⁹ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *Jodhpur*, part 1

claim any right or title to the land in village or villages granted to him. In such a category of assignment the pattdar was entitled to the collection of land revenue from the Peasants in his jurisdiction, but he was not the owner of the land. The ownership and the right of riaya remained undisturbed and they paid the state demand to the village officials who in their turn deposited it with the *hakim*. While maintaining restrictions on the *pattadars*, the state could interfere in these *patta* lands. This was an important change in the nature of the *pattas*, in comparison to the *pattas* granted to the Rathore sardars earlier.

The *pattas* granted to the Rathore sardars outside Marwar could be taken back as *jagirs* of the *mansabdar* (or the Raja) were transferable or could be cancelled by the Mughal emperor. The transferable *pattas* were known as *pher-badal-ra-patta*.³⁰ In such *pattas* the amount of the *patta* remained the same but the possession over the villages was subject to change. But the principle of transfer was not implemented strictly. The *pattas* remained with the grantee as long as he was in the state service or till his death. After the death of the grantee it depended on the will of the ruler to bestow the same *patta* upon the son of the deceased or not. As the amount of *patta* was determined on the basis of one's salary claim it was not necessary that while granting the *patta* to the son of the deceased he should get the same amount or the *patta* or the villages which his predecessor held. The worth of *patta*, whether higher or lower, depended upon the status of the grantee. The assignment could also be made in altogether different Parganas. Thus these *pattas* were not hereditary and could be taken into *khalisa* or transferred to any other *pattadar*. It is noteworthy that even within Marwar the grantee was not given the villages in one tappa.³¹ Sometime these

³⁰ Sharma, Some land revenue, *Proceedings*, pp.288-292.

³¹ Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *Jodhpur*, part 1

villages could be scattered over different tappas or Parganas. Such a practice was restored in order to keep control over the sardars. For internal stability the earlier arrangement of *bhai-bant* provided an opportunity to the nobles to function independently and to claim hereditary rights. The power of transfer was an important tool in the hands of the ruler to keep the nobility under control.

Ajit Singh started granting *pattas* to the Rathore sardars against their service leading to the restoration of the *pattadari* system prevailing during the time of Jaswant Singh. He took a stern attitude towards the sardars who had not Supported his cause during the period of adversity. Such sardars were holding *pattas* since the time of Jaswant Singh and later, their *pattas* were recognized as watan *jagirs* by the emperor. Those who were either paying the land revenue to the Mughal officers or were engaged in the Mughal service were granted the right of realizing land revenue of their respective *patta* lands by the Mughal emperor.

Ajit Singh couldn't change the nature of the grant of the *pattas*. The domination of the clan continued. Ajit Singh deprived many of the sardars of their *thikanas* and *patta* land but in most of the cases after the confiscation of the *patta* or the *thikanas* it was granted to a sardar belonging to the same family.³² Thus the clan rights over the *patta* lands were in general recognized by the state. The practice of the transfer of the *pattas* as prevalent during the time of Jaswant Singh and was continued by Ajit Singh during his reign. The *patta* villages of a grantee were not centered at one place, but were scattered over various tappas or Parganas. The *pattadar* was granted the land revenue of the area indicated in the *patta* and no additional claim could be inferred.

³² Chandra, Singh and Sharma, *Jodhpur*, part 1

Juni Jagir

Ajit Singh started a new practice of collecting a lump-sum amount known as tagirat-bal from the *pattadars* along with the amount of peshkash or hukamnama. Though this tax existed earlier and was collected during the time of adversity, it was now made permanent and added to the amount of hukamnama. The peasants paid this tax to maintain the right over their land and also to avoid plunder by the Rathore army.³³ This tagirat was a sort of extra tax paid to the Maharaja or the *pattadars* in addition to the ordinary revenue to the Mughals. As the *patta* was granted in lieu of the service, the grantee held the *patta* as long as he remained employed in the state service. When the *pattadar* was removed from the service his *patta* was also cancelled. At times, on confiscation of the *patta* villages, the Raja could permit the *pattadar* to retain a few fields just to save him from becoming homeless and destitute. This was known as Juni *jagir*.

The decline of the imperial power led to change in the position of the *pattadars* particularly who were serving outside Marwar. Their *jagirs* yielded only a small revenue. At the same time, due to increasing Maratha incursions into the Rajput territories and also on account of internal feuds among the Rajput Rajas, their presence was needed in Marwar. These changes became more apparent after the death of Abhay Singh when Maharaja Bijay Singh started realizing a lump sum amount from the *pattadars*. The amount fixed against the *rekha* was termed as *mutalba*. The *pattadars* assumed a different position, as now they had to pay a fixed amount or tribute to the Rathore ruler. Thus by paying a lump sum amount annually against their *patta* lands, the *pattadars* retained their control over their *patta* villages and thereby

³³ Ajit Singh had changed the name of peshkash to Hukamnama on the conferment on him the title of Raj-Rajeswar in 1711.

assumed the character of peshkash-i-zamindar. These changes were, in fact, introduced during the reign of Abhay Singh, who had realized lump sum amounts from the *pattadars* to pay a huge amount to the Marathas and to maintain his own internal establishments. The orders issued on behalf of diwan Bhandari Bijay Rai to the *pattadars* (*jagirdars*), *bhomias* and State officials- such as qanungos indicate that the earlier dasturs relating to the bhog, kharach-bhog and lag-bag remained the same.³⁴ Another change during the reign of Abhay Singh was the adoption of the practice of *ijara* by the state. The letter issued on behalf of the Raja to Bhandari Amar Singh authorized the latter to collect the revenue from two villages of Pargana Sojat for a year.³⁵

The amount paid by the *ijaradas*, was assessed on the basis of the hasil of the previous year. We do not have such information for the *patta* villages. The available account of the *ijara* of the khalisa lands suggests that at least in khalisa territory this had become the general practice. Apparently, the practice of the *ijara* stemmed out of the State's need for money to meet its expenses which increased as the State had to pay huge amount to Maratha Commanders. Thus, the organisation of the nobility which had assumed a definite form during the time of Sur Singh, started taking a different shape during the latter half of Abhay Singh's reign. Six years after his death the whole character and the composition of the nobility had changed.

Jaipur became a major state of the Rajputana as a result of the position enjoyed by its rulers in the service of the Mughals. The expansion of the Jaipur state did not take place essentially as the result of military conquests but mainly due to the transfer of various Parganas by the Mughal authority to the Jaipur rulers over a period of time. In

³⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.137

³⁵ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.137

the beginning these transfers were not intended to be permanent and were in the form of either in the ordinary *jagir* assignments or leases or *ijara*, but as the Mughal Empire weakened, the Jaipur rulers absorbed these territories into their hereditary estates.³⁶

Taking advantage of the weakening power of the Mughal authority Sawai Jai Singh extended his watan *jagir* by taking *jagirs* in tankhwah , *Ijara* and Inam. At the time of his accession the principality consisted mainly of the Amber territory only. The areas in the immediate vicinity of Amber were also not included in Amber and some of them as close as Chatsu and Manoharpur were under the imperial control. Jai Singh made full use of the situation and got many of his demand fulfilled and got the *jagir* of Parganaś Chatsu, Mauzabad, Dausa and the Parganas which were in the *jagir* of the late Mirza Raja earlier. He also tried to get *jagirs* near his watan. This helped him in consolidating his position as it was easier to control the areas near his watan. He acquired some of the *Ijara* land permanently and got full authority and complete political jurisdiction over such areas. He made use of the Farming system to extend his territories.³⁷

These areas were administered by leases or through subordinate *ijaradars*. The Likhtan documents give details regarding the sub-leases of different Parganas for different years.³⁸ The practice of taking taking Parganas on *ijara* continued throughout the reign of Ajit Singh and his successors. These subordinate *ijaradars* were at first nothing more than Jai Singh's lessees but later they became the hereditary owner of his *Thikana*. Ishwari Singh continued to hold a large area under his control. Many of the Parganas held by the Jaipur rulers in tankhwah *jagir* against their *mansab*

³⁶ Gupta, Expansion of the territory, *Proceedings*, pp.177-183

³⁷ Gupta, Expansion of the territory, *Proceedings*, pp.177-183

³⁸ Gupta, Expansion of the territory, *Proceedings*, pp.177-183

or inam or taken by them on *ijara* were part and parcel of the Mughal Empire. They were not to be treated as their zamindari zones.³⁹

The weakening power of the imperial authority had its impact on the ruler and the nobility of Amber. The rulers of Amber while dealing with Mughal territory had to adhere to the norms of administration which had been established by the Mughals. But the Jaipur rulers didn't apply all the rules and regulations of the Mughals in their areas. Jai Singh assigned the maximum *jagirs* to persons either from his clan or from the sardars who were directly under his control. The number of Rajawat assignees were the largest. The clan regime sustained the position of the Amber ruler. The Shaikhawats who were sub-assignees once upon a time became independent of the Jaipur ruler. Sawai Jai Singh followed the policy of transfer of *jagirs* only in the case of defaulters. Even tankhwah *jagir* was being passed on from father to son and then to grandson on a hereditary basis simply after examining the sanad. There was an attempt to keep the peasantry in good humour so that they didn't indulge in revolt. Though, cases of oppression of peasantry by a *jagirdars* did occur, this did not lead to any peasant uprising.⁴⁰ Even if the rate of demand of land revenue was higher on ordinary peasants, the situation of flight or migration of peasantry did not occur in this area except during the times of famine and scarcity. The state was strong enough to take care of the welfare of the peasantry in case there was an excess or illegal demand either from the *jagirdar* or the zamindar. The peasant-*Jagirdar* relationship was in a way redefined.

³⁹ S.P. Gupta, "The agrarian crisis of the Mughal empire and the agrarian conditions in the Jaipur region (c.1650-1750)", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1993, Vol. pp.325-331

⁴⁰ Gupta, The agrarian crisis, *Proceedings*, pp.325-331

The clan affiliations were very important to keep the assignees under control. There was no *mansab* system in Jaipur so the Mughal dilemma of *mansab jagir* disproportion did not happen here. The instances of *ijara* istamrari (permanent or long term revenue farms) increased and the practice of long term *ijara* became common which led to the rise of territorial thikanedars, who later on began to act practically as independent chiefs.⁴¹ A privileged class of peasants like khud kasht, patil etc. existed in Jaipur who paid land revenue at a lower rate than to ordinary cultivators. They cultivated land with their own resources and along with the privileges owed certain other obligations to the state. In times of scarcity every measure was adopted to rehabilitate the peasant. New tracts of land were offered to them with extensive concessions. The state itself borrowed money from the money lender at high rate of interest but provided agricultural loans to the peasants at lower rates. They also tried to prevent complaints from peasants reaching the imperial Court. The rulers made every attempt to increase the productivity in their areas there was marked extension of cultivation during the period. The proportion of the cultivated area in the total measured area in the villages of Pargana Chatsu and Malarna was very high.⁴² Large number of new villages (dakhili) and the settlements of paltis (initially temporary cultivator and with a passage of time emerging as khud kasht peasants) are found. The paltis or outside cultivators were generally invited to colonize or found a new village. The concessions extended to them by the state were the grant of the '*patta vat vih*' (concessional *patta*), and provisions of ploughs, manures, seeds, etc. Their cultivation

⁴¹ Gupta, The agrarian crisis, *Proceedings*, pp.325-331

⁴² Gupta, The agrarian crisis, *Proceedings*, pp.325-331, The proportion of the cultivated area in the total measured area in the villages of Pargana Chatsu (1666) ranged from 54% to 81%. In Pargana Malarna (1665), the average cultivated area in 34 villages amounted to 79%

led to increase in the peasant's holdings including paltis being newly settled together with their cattle.⁴³

The shortage of *jagir* and the subsequent oppression of the peasantry by the *jagirdar* was a common phenomenon during this period. The same situation was there in Amber but the same degree of oppression was not witnessed there and no extreme fiscal pressure was put upon the peasantry. The Mughal practice of assigning the *jagir* was adopted here in the shape of sub-assignments, but there appears to be no pressure on the reserve of land available for *jagirs* lying with the state. There were certain softening elements present: clan-ties, increasingly quasi-permanent nature of the Amber Darbar's control of the territory, a sub-assignment system different from the Mughals.⁴⁴

Jai Singh tried to secure Parganas in *jagir* including *bhomi* rights. The *bhomi* grants were held without any condition of service except that of watch and ward. Bhumias were known in the various parts of Rajasthan. These bhumias most probably, did not enjoy a recognised right of an obligation of paying revenue at a fixed sum. They were neither *ijaradars*, nor were they *istimiradars*. They should be treated as a special class who held their land in *bhomi*, or hereditary right. Their assessment was not permanently fixed.⁴⁵ So cherished was this tenure of *bhomi*, that the greatest chiefs always were eager to obtain it even in the villages wholly dependent on their authority. This grant was more secure and inheritable than the common grants. It may be that these persons sometimes asserted that they ought not to pay the assessed revenue in lieu of performing services but this may be doubted since the assessment on their lands was much lower. A comparative study of the total income from *bhomi*

⁴³ Gupta, The agrarian crisis, *Proceedings*, pp.325-331

⁴⁴ Gupta, The agrarian crisis, *Proceedings*, pp.325-331

⁴⁵ Moosvi and Gupta, *Bhomi in the territories*, *Proceedings*, pp.353-359.

in different Parganas suggests that the revenue from *bhomi* increase roughly after 1712.⁴⁶

Apart from the Parganas in *jagir* including *bhomi* rights, Jai Singh also tried get high *mansabs*, renumerative *jagirs*, *ijaras* and appointments as subedars and faujdars in the regions of their own choice. This was done with the purpose of keeping a watchful eye on the development of court politics. He did not hesitate either to join a powerful factional group in the court or deserting it and joining some others to achieve his aims and gains. He successfully used the money power to gain favours from the Mughal officials. The carving out of the Jaipur state at the cost of Mughal empire was the culmination of this policy. These annexed to his principality large areas outside his watan.⁴⁷ As soon as the Mughal administration began to disintegrate Jai Singh did not hesitate to enlarge his zamindari rights at the cost of the local zamindars. This is also true in case of certain independent *thikanas* like panchpana Singhana It comprised three old Mughal Parganas of Jhunjhunu, Narhar and Singhana. These Parganas were taken over by Sawai Jai Singh from the Mughal state between 1730 and 1750 and was held by a branch of the Shekhawats, known as sadanis.⁴⁸ During the later part of his reign Jai Singh started harassing the ordinary *jagirdars* near his watan and zamindari area.

Another feature of administration adopted by Jai Singh in watan and non watan area was the start of farming system. Allowing the latitude of dangers that farming of revenue incur it seems significant that the Raja leased out the whole Parganas of kol to the local zamindars of the area. Since the bulk of the population belonged to the jat community and it was difficult to realize the revenue from them without applying

⁴⁶ Moosvi and Gupta, *Bhomi in the territories*, *Proceedings*, pp.353-359

⁴⁷ Khan, Sawai Jai Singh's administration, *Proceedings*, pp.246-253.

⁴⁸ Khan, Sawai Jai Singh's administration, *Proceedings*, pp.246-253.

force, it was a tactful move on the part of Jai Singh to resort to *ijara* without having a confrontation. These *ijaradars* were in all the cases either muqqaddams or qanungos or chaudhuri. In tappa Gorai of Pargana kol all the *ijaradars* belonged to jat community. By adopting such a policy he could keep friendly relations with the Jats as well and implement the Imperial orders. It seems that the carrying out of administration by the Raja was not possible without such an arrangement. Friendly gesture in such Parganas did not mean appeasement. The amils of Parganas Khohri and pahari were cautioned that the area sublet to jat *ijardar* could be resumed. Warning was also issued not to repeat such sub-lease in future.⁴⁹

Jai Singh was conscious while dealing as an administrator in the areas outside his watan that there should be application of the rules of the Mughal administration, while keeping good relations with the local chiefs. Therefore, he adhered to the regular standard Mughal bureaucratic administration in Ujjain, Rewari and Mathura. But keeping in view the uncertainty of misholding the *jagirs* due to the quick transfer of *jagirs* he did not opt for *ijara* as in the case of Kol and Akbarabad. In no case does he appear to have deviated from the Mughal system. He neither had the ambition to be the sovereign of these areas nor perhaps was he allowed to be contrary to the case of his watan and adjoining areas.⁵⁰ The limitation of Jai Singh as a ruler was that he didn't innovate much. In the context of the disintegrating Mughal power, he could have thought of ingenious ideas but he kept rooted in the existing political culture. He tried to be intimate with the local potentates. He had to act as a *jagirdar* and also as an agent of the Mughal power to carry out its orders and regulations, so long as the Mughal central administration was able to function. The Amber rulers tried to emulate

⁴⁹ Khan, Sawai Jai Singh's administration, *Proceedings*, pp.246-253.

⁵⁰ Khan, Relations of ruler, *Proceedings*, pp.306-311.

the Mughal custom of sub- assigning their territory. This they presumably did as it proved beneficial to their interests. Like the Mughals, the Amber rulers retained full control over the area thus sub- assigned to the various classes of the people, while having certain tracts under their direct control. The sub-assignee had to collect the land revenue in his *jagir* and extend all cooperation to the state officials. This amount was substantial. 'His share ranged from one half to one sixth of the produce in different areas.⁵¹ areas. The maintenance of a military contingent was obligatory for the sub assignee. There appears to be a parallel practice of sub assignments to maintain per unit of sawar. There was also the practice for sub-assignment to jamiatdars who were assigned *jagirs* for maintenance of more than a unit of sawar.

⁵¹ Khan, Relations of ruler, *Proceedings*, pp.306-311.

CHAPTER THREE

Dynamics of Mughal-Rajput Relations and Inter-State Interactions

The Mughal-Rajput relations entered a new phase after the death of Aurangzeb. The rivalry among the claimants to the throne, court politics at the Mughal court, rebellion in different areas of the empire etc. led to this. The Mughal emperors though wanted to control the Rajput rulers were at times compelled to take help from them. The Rajput rulers tried to take advantage of this and repeated violation of imperial orders became a general practice. There were many instances of conflict with the imperial authority which started right after the death of Aurangzeb. The gradual weakening of the imperial authority emboldened the Rajput rulers to challenge them.

Rajput policy of the Mughals and the response of Rajput kings

The Rajput policy of Bahadur Shah was in many ways a continuation of the policy Aurangzeb in Marwar¹. Bahadur Shah deprived Jai Singh of Amber, on the plea that there was a dispute for the Kachhawaha throne between the two brothers, Jai Singh and Vijay Singh. Jai Singh had long been the follower and favourite of Bidar Bakht, son of Azam Shah. His younger brother Vijay Singh had been a refugee at the court of Bahadur Shah. So, when Bahadur Shah arrived at Amber on his way to Marwar, he gave the Kachhawaha kingdom to Vijay Singh.² The name of the town was changed to Islamabad and a new faujdar Saiyid Ahmad Khan Barah was sent there. Amber had been in their Possession for a long time and such order had never been issued before.

¹ Chandra, "Some News letters (Akhbarat) relating to Bahadur Shah I", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1961, Vol.24. pg 142-44

² Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan Through the ages*, p.87

Jai Singh sought advice from the Maharana. At the time of Aurangzeb's death, Ajit Singh was an imperial *mansabdar* and making use of the situation occupied Jodhpur without the permission of the emperor. But the arrival of emperor Bahadur Shah at Ajmer left no other alternative before Ajit Singh but to offer his submission to the emperor. The loss of their watan was an emotional issue for both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh decided to get their goals fulfilled by advocating their own cases and even by bribing the imperial officers. If it didn't work they were to detach from the imperial army.³

The other Rajput rulers also came in support of them. Rao Budh Singh of Budni despite having fought on the side of Bahadur Shah against Azam Shah and being granted many Parganas including Kota decided to support both Rajput rajas. He stated that the emperor was being revengeful against these Rajas for their role in the war of succession. Budh Singh also tried to bring into the religious issues and stated that the Policy of the emperor was anti-Hindu. It seems that Budh Singh had sympathy with Jai Singh as the latter had married his sister to the former just before the imperial control over Amber.⁴ It is worth noting that Jai Singh had not referred to the disputes with his brother on account of which the emperor had justified his action against Amber. It seems that by raising the issue of his Participation against Bahadur Shah, he wanted the help of other Rajput rulers.

Jai Singh had sought help from Amar Singh and Ajit Singh but none of them responded favourably to the letters of Jai Singh. The position of nobles like Durgadas Rathore had elevated to the extent that after the failure to get any support from them that Maharaja Jai Singh wrote a letter to Durgadas Rathore and requested him to

³ Sangwan, *Jodhpur*, p.4.

⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.221

intercede on his behalf.⁵ However Durgadas made no effort to help Maharaja Jai Singh. The fact that in spite of the repeated request for help and raising the slogan of Hinduism being in danger none of these Rajput rulers paid any heed to the problem of Amber show that the religious factor was not important in the calculations of the Rajput Rajas.⁶

Ajit Singh favoured united action against the Mughals only when he himself was dislodged from Jodhpur. Following the order of the emperor, both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh remained at the imperial camp while he proceeded to the South to deal with Kam Bakhsh. These Rajas were left with Khan-i-Zaman and no definite instructions were issued for them. Both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh expected that the emperor would restore their watan *jagirs* soon. The period of absence of the emperor was used by both the rulers. During the absence of Bahadur Shah for more than two years Amber and Marwar got united. Asad Khan, had to patch up with them and Ajit Singh and Jai Singh recovered their respective capitals. The attitude of the Mughal emperor forced the two Rajas to come to an understanding.

They now decided to take a different course of action and abruptly broke away from the imperial army. This was a very important departure from the earlier practice and the imperial authority was challenged directly. They first went Ujjain and then to Pratapgarh. They were received well at both places by Badan Singh and Thakur Pratap Singh respectively. They came to know that the Maharana might be of some help to them. The relations of Jai Singh and Ajit Singh with Maharana Amar Singh had not been cordial for some time owing to some personal misunderstanding. On getting a favourable answer from the Maharana they proceeded towards Udaipur. Jai

⁵ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.222

⁶ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.222

Singh reposed full faith in Maharana Amar Singh who received Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas very well.⁷ On the basis of Jodhpur-Khyat it is generally affirmed that at Udaipur the three Raja decided not only to recover their watans but also to bring the whole of Hindustan under their sway.⁸ The Maharana was warned not to help the rebel chiefs and was to persuade them to send their petition to the emperor.

It is significant to note that till then Maharana Amar Singh had not shown any indication of his desire to help these Rajas against the Mughal emperor. The Maharana was morally obliged to Ajit Singh. Ajit Singh had helped the Maharana when prince Amar Singh had rebelled against him. Both Durgadas Rathore and Mukand Das Champawat were in the army which restored peace in Mewar and helped to establish cordial relations between father and son in Mewar. However due to the interference of Ajit Singh in the affairs of Sirohi which was granted to Maharana Amar Singh, the relations between the two had become strained. But later the misunderstanding was removed and their relations were further strengthened by the mediation of Durgadas Rathore and Rai Bhagwan Das. Durgadas Rathore had accepted the service of the Maharana.⁹ Rai Bhagwandas also maintained cordial relations with the Rana and held a *jagir* in Mewar.

Alliances among Rajput Rulers

When Ajit Singh and Jai Singh accompanied by Durgadas reached Mewar, the Rana received them warmly. He also gave his daughter in marriage to Jai Singh. This was very significant event as the Kacchwahas were accepted as saga by Mewar.¹⁰ The marriage was performed on the condition that the son born out of this marriage would

⁷ Shyamal Das, *Vir Vinod*, Mewar ka itihaas, Jaipur, Vol.ii

⁸ Bhargav, *Marwar*, p.149

⁹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.390

¹⁰ Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, p.30

ascend the gaddi of Jaipur and if a daughter was born, she would not be married to any musalmaan.¹¹ This agreement later became a bone of contention between the two states. It seems that after having failed to persuade the emperor, they decided to get the help of the Rana.¹² The Rana got an opportunity to get into prominence by playing the role of a mediator. This, in fact, happened when the Rana received a nishan from prince Jahandar Shah in which he was asked not to assist the two Rajput rulers, but to send their arzis to the emperor for pardon. The prince gave the assurance that he would obtain the sanads of the *jagirs* and the payment of salaries which though already sanctioned had been delayed because of the ahalkars. The Maharana then sent the arzis of Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas to the court in which they sought forgiveness for leaving the court without permission.¹³ The Rana could be assessed on the basis of the contents of the above correspondence. He didn't want to antagonise the imperial authority and at the same time wanted to be with the Rajput rulers.

He was in favour of the restoration of the watan *jagirs* to these Rajas and thus he was pleading their case in the Mughal court. Both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh had also sent their arzis with the same thing in mind. Apparently Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were waiting for a favourable response even after their flight from the imperial camp. The Rana was using his own influence for getting back their watans. But failing to get any encouraging reply from the side of the emperor they decided to regain their watan lands by force.

¹¹ Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, p.34

¹² Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

¹³ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

They entered Jodhpur and Ajit Singh was coronated. Jai Singh put the tika on Ajit Singh.¹⁴ He also accepted the invitation to marry the daughter of Ajit Singh. Jai Singh also wrote letters to Maratha ruler Shahu and Bundela leader Chatrashal. But Rana Amar Singh himself did not participate in it, and sent a Mewari contingent under Shyamaldas and Mahasahani Chaturbhuj as military aid. The combined army headed by four separate commanders, i.e. Ajit Singh, Jai Singh, Durgadas Rathore and Shyamaldas marched towards Jodhpur. This army was not commanded by a single commander; rather each one of them was free to take his own decision for operations. This actually happened when Ajit Singh after the occupation of Jodhpur, made no haste to march against Amber. Thus the unity of these Rajput states was disrupted; their primary object being to regain their respective watan *jagirs*. The military help rendered by the Rana and the participation of Durgadas Rathore were aimed at achieving the above objective rather than challenging the Mughal authority. The internal situation of Marwar and Amber was favourable for Ajit Singh and Jai Singh. In Marwar, Rai Bhagwan Das and Raghunath Bhandari were active and apart from Jodhpur and Merta, the number of Ajit Singh's followers was increasing considerably. The combined army besieged Jodhpur in 1708. After five days of the siege the fort was evacuated.¹⁵ Ajit Singh was allowed to retreat unharmed.

Durgadas Rathore remained with Ajit Singh till he had secured control over Jodhpur but when Ajit Singh got preoccupied with Jodhpur affairs, he went away to his *thikana* Samdari where he waited to join Jai Singh in his campaign against Amber. Maharaja Jai Singh stayed at Jodhpur, but he realised that Ajit Singh was delaying the

¹⁴ Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, p.34

¹⁵ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

expedition against Amber. Durgadas Rathore was prepared to march with Maharaja Jai Singh even if Ajit Singh failed to arrive. The letter written by Durgadas to the Rana clearly indicates that after securing their control over Jodhpur, the combined army was to march for Amber. It is apparent that Durgadas's task was to help these Rajas in securing their watan lands. He had no personal ambition in Marwar. He participated in the combined expedition because the Rana asked him to do so. There were cracks in the unity of the rulers as each one was interested in his own goal.

This explains the policy of the Rana who was not ready for any united resistance against the Mughals and only wanted to help these Rajput Rajas in regaining their watan lands. Maharaja Jai Singh and Durgadas were waiting for Ajit Singh when he arrived at Pipad with his contingent. After the occupation of Jodhpur, Jai Singh forced Saiyyid Hussain Ali Khan to retreat near Kaladera and his son was killed.

In July 1708 diwan RamChandra Muhta and Shyam Sing Kachhawah succeeded in securing their control over Amber and the Mughal faujdar, Husain Khan Baraha, was forced to leave Amber.¹⁶ After this achievement Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas assembled at Pushkar to decide the future course of action. Here it was decided that the Rana should also come and participate. Accordingly, the Rajput rulers persuaded Durgadas Rathore to go to Udaipur, but the decision had to be changed later on.

At the Mughal court there were different opinions. Asad Khan wanted a conciliatory policy and suggested a *mansab* of four thousand personnel and three thousand zat and the title of Raja' to be given to Ajit Singh, and a *mansab* of two thousand and five hundred personnel and two thousand zat along with the title of Raja' to be given to Jai Singh. Munim Khan, on the other hand, insisted for retributive measures. In the

¹⁶ Chandra, *Parties*, p.31

meantime Saiyyid Hussain Ali made preparations to launch an attack upon Amber. These political events explain the necessity of it. Saiyyid Husain Khan, the defeated faujdar of Amber, after collecting sufficient army, had advanced towards Amber from Narnol to regain control over Amber. The Rajput Rajas, therefore, decided not to give any chance to Husain Khan to achieve his goal. The absence of Durgadas would have delayed the action of the Rajput Rajas and provided enough time to the Mughals to strengthen their position. It was also doubtful that the Rana himself would have agreed to come personally to help Jai Singh and Ajit Singh against the Mughals. The unity among them was always in doubt as each one of them was looking for his own personal gains. Both the Rajas and Durgadas Rathore proceeded towards Sambhar. Saiyyid Husain Khan, with his brothers, the faujdars of Merta and Narnol, challenged them at Sambhar. In the battle of Sambhar Saiyyid Husain Khan and his brothers were killed and the Rajputs gained the victory. But Jai Singh changed his strategy very soon.

Durgadas had pitched his camp separately at Sambhar. This shows the stature that Durgadas had gained as a noble. The act of Durgadas Rathore was not surprising as he had done it earlier also and had acted independently at the time of Ajit Singh's occupation of Jodhpur. In fact he came out in favour of these Rajput Rajas because he was asked by the Rana to do so. After the victory at Sambhar, Durgadas did not stay for long and proceeded to Mewar. It appears that Durgadas was not ready to involve himself in the activities of Ajit Singh who had decided to keep control over Sambhar and Didwana and wanted to invade the imperial territory towards Narnol. Ajit Singh and Jai Singh stayed at Sambhar for a few weeks to make necessary administrative arrangements. It was agreed that the revenue of the conquered territory would be equally divided between the two. Both of them shared the responsibility of

administration equally. Maharaja Ajit Singh appointed the son of Bhandari Khivsi as *hakim* and Jagram as a *kotwal*. The purpose of making these administrative arrangements was to keep joint control over that territory for a long period. The victory at Sambhar infused a new spirit in Ajit Singh who, after making some security arrangements at Sambhar, proceeded to Jodhpur.¹⁷ He did not spend much time in Jodhpur and after effecting necessary administrative changes, marched against Nagaur.

When Mohkam Singh heard of the approach of Ajit Singh, he fled to Ladnu and Rao Indra Singh had to take shelter in the fort. On Ajit Singh's arrival at Nagaur, the mother of Indra Singh came to see him and persuaded him to leave Nagaur with Indra Singh. Mohkam Singh agreed to accept Ajit Singh's overlordship. In accepting Mohkam Singh's submission Ajit Singh was only following the principle of 'bhai-bandh-chakar' and accordingly he was ready to accept Mohkam Singh as a ruler of Nagaur as long as he obeyed his command.¹⁸ Ajit Singh thereafter returned to Jodhpur. Now apart from Jodhpur Ajit Singh had secured his control over Merta, Sojat, Jaitaran and Phalodi which were parts of Marwar. Thus he had achieved his long-cherished desire, though its recognition by the Mughal emperor was still lacking. The emperor till now had not shown any inclination of granting him Jodhpur. In 1709 Ajit Singh left Jodhpur and reached Merta from where he was to march on Ajmer.

Jai Singh had earlier promised to march from Amber to Ajmer as soon as he heard of the advance on Merta. Ajit Singh did not wait for Jai Singh for a long time and he reached Ajmer and besieged the provincial capital for fifteen days. The Mughal subadar, Shujat Khan, agreed to pay a hefty amount whereupon Ajit Singh returned to

¹⁷ Ramkaran, *Rajroopak*, p.55

¹⁸ Sharma, *Ajtoday and Glimpses of society, Proceedings*, pp.283-290

Jodhpur.¹⁹ It is doubtful whether Ajit Singh wanted to extend his control over Ajmer. If that was his motive he could have postponed his attack till the arrival of Jai Singh. It seems that Ajit Singh wanted to terrorize the Mughal subadar of Ajmer so that the decision of granting him Jodhpur could be speeded up.

Rift between Ajit Singh and Jai Singh

Jai Singh delayed his plans to arrive at Ajmer. He was having negotiations with the Imperial authorities. Amber's vakil, Jagjiwan das, was carrying on negotiations with Mughal officers and pleaded through prince Azim-us-shan and Sarbuland Khan for the grant of a *mansab* of 5000/5000, title of Mirza Raja, and restoration of watan for his ruler. But the emperor did not agree to all the demands. The increase in the *mansab* rank was also not met with. The emperor threw a hint to confer on him a *mansab* of 3000 and the restoration of the Kachhwaha territory except Kasba Amber. This didn't satisfy him as the grant of the city of Amber was also not met. Jai Singh wrote to the Sikh leader Banda Singh for armed assistance. Banda Singh promised to co-operate provided Ajit also agreed to this plan. Owing to an estrangement since the battle of Sambhar, Jai Singh did not think it advisable to carry negotiations with Ajit Singh.

The Sikhs had risen up in rebellion in the Punjab under the leadership of Banda. The faujdar of Sirhind reported that a huge crowd had gathered at Sadhaura, and hailed sometimes the Guru and sometimes declared that a Saiyid had come in their midst with miraculous beings was leading them. They had ravaged the Pargana in the doab upto the river (Jamuna), besieged Saharanpur, and killed many persons in a clash near

¹⁹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.392

Lahore. The reference to the alleged mysterious appearance of a Saiyid among the Sikhs shows the continued hold of Mahadavite legends among the Muslims, and their refusal to believe that the success of the Sikhs could be explained by purely rational factors. which reported large-scale Sikh activities in Panipat and Sonapat, pointedly referred to the fact that the zamindars of Pargana Samana, Kanthal etc., had joined the Sikhs. The support of the local zamindars appears to have been an important factor in the rapid success of the Sikh.²⁰

Nizam Mulk tried to avert the Rajput-Sikh coalition and chose the path of diplomacy rather than that of armed confrontation with the Rajputs.²¹ Through Asad Khan he sought to prevail upon the emperor to grant a *Mansab* of 3500/3000 and the Parganas of Amber, Phagi and Dausa and a *Jagir* worth thirty five lakhs to Jai Singh. Jai Singh on his part sent Dewan Bihari Das and Har Charan Pancholi to carry on the negotiations with the imperial authority. Meanwhile Jai Singh came to know about the march of Saiyyid Abdullah Khan, the newly appointed Nazim, towards Ajmer. He urged Maharana Amar Singh as well as Ajit Singh to make a concerted move to check the advance of Saiyyid Abdullah Khan who did not happen to be sympathetic to their cause. The Maharana appeared evasive although Ajit Singh agreed to mobilise. Subsequent to his arrival at Merta, Ajit Singh awaited for the march of Jai Singh. Jai Singh promised to move when Ajit Singh proceeded ahead from Merta. Accordingly, Ajit Singh continued his march and besieged Shujaat Khan, the Mughal Subedar, for a fortnight and made him to pay a hefty amount.

²⁰ Chandra, Some News letters, *Proceedings*, pp.142-44

²¹ Tikkiwal, *Jaipur*, p.28

The emperor then appointed Nizam ul Mulk as Nazim in place of Shujaat Khan. Jai Singh tried to use his good relations with Nizam ul Mulk and wrote to him to plead his case before the emperor. Nizam ul Mulk was apprehensive of the activities of Ajit Singh. To reaffirm his loyalty Jai Singh presented two ashrafis and two horses with golden harness to the emperor. The emperor accepted the present of ashrafis only and granted Jaisinghpura to him. Jai Singh then opened negotiations through Shujaat Khan, Nazim of Ajmer but the emperor was ready to increase of 500 only in the *mansab* of Jai Singh and the grant of Pargana Deoti as enjoyed by him during the reign of Aurangzeb. Jai Singh was not willing to accept such a degraded status.²² He then got nearer to Ajit Singh and in close collaboration with him reiterated his decision to organise a united front against the Imperial forces. He sent an emissary, Fatchchand to Karauli to open hostilities against Hidayat Ullah and Ajit Singh encouraged the Kolis to plunder the mahals around Ahmedabad. Ram Chand, Dewan of Jai Singh, besieged the Naib-Qiladar of Ranthambhor and the Mughals could push them back with great difficulty.²³

Thus it is Obvious that while these negotiations were going on Jai Singh avoided attacking the imperial thanas. Jai Singh also wanted to secure the favour of the emperor as is obvious from the fact that Shujat Khan praised Jai Singh for his non-cooperation with the Rathores and for Persuading Ajit Singh to return from Ajmer. Further, Jai Singh was aware that Vijay Singh was pressing the emperor for granting him Amber. Thus while both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were exchanging cordial letters, each of them was making Individual efforts to get back his watan. Since Bahadur Shah failed to satisfy the Rajput Rajas regarding their watans. Ajit Singh and

²² Tikkiwal, *Jaipur*, p.28

²³ Tikkiwal, *Jaipur*, p.28

Jai Singh Continued their united Opposition. But the Rajput rulers persisted in Pleading their cases before the emperor through the Maharana as well as through their respective vakils at the court.²⁴ Ajit Singh took the lead in inviting the Maharana with his army to invade the imperial territory The Maharana sent an army under the command of Durgadas Rathore.

While Ajit Singh was preparing to demonstrate his Strength, Maharaja Jai Singh was persuading the former to have an audience with the emperor. The letter of Bihari Das explains that Maharaja Jai Singh was not willing to participate in any activity which would cause further complications. In fact, Jai Singh and Ajit Singh were suspicious of one another and were not ready to come into conflict with the Mughal emperor. Thus, the united front against the Mughals had been virtually defunct. At the same time it was obvious that these Rajput Rajas would continue their struggle till they got their respective watans. It is to be noted that a powerful section of the nobility led by Asad Khan, the former wazir of Aurangzeb, and his son, Zulfiqar Khan, the mir-hakhshi, held a sympathetic attitude towards these Rajput Rajas.²⁵ Bhandari Khivsi, the vakil of Maharaja Ajit Singh at the court, was engaged in negotiations with emperor Bahadur Shah through prince Azim-us-Shan who was high in his father's favour. Prince Azim-us-Shan told Bhandari Khivsi that nothing could be expected unless both the Rajas attended the court personally.

The vakil of Maharaja Jai Singh was repeatedly asking the latter to come to the court immediately without waiting for Maharaja Ajit Singh. In the letter written to Maharaja Ajit Singh, Jai Singh expressed his desire to appear in the court without any

²⁴ A Descriptive list of the Vakil Reports addressed to the rulers of Jaipur, vol I and vol ii, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner, 1967.

²⁵ Chandra, *Parties*, p.35

delay.²⁶ Obviously, Jai Singh wanted to establish that he had every intention to attend the court and, therefore, he sent his consent without waiting for Ajit Singh's reply. The reason behind the delay on the part of Ajit Singh was his preoccupation with internal problems. He could leave the territory only after making the administration effective in Marwar. But the rapid march of Bahadur Shah towards Ajmer left no alternative for Ajit Singh except to attend the court personally.

On hearing about the imperial expedition, Jai Singh and Ajit Singh again combined together and made preparations to combat the imperial army. Ajit Singh besieged Indra Singh of Nagor and withdrew after realizing a ransom of Rupees fifteen thousand. The Maharana tried to intervene and requested the emperor to assume a liberal attitude towards them. The emperor instructed him to advise the aggrieved chieftains to seek forgiveness. Jai Singh and Ajit Singh sent four emissaries for seeking forgiveness.

In 1710 the emperor ordered Mahabat Khan to proceed along with Chhatrasal and Raja Budh Singh to bring Jai Singh and Ajit Singh to the court. The farman addressed to Ajit Singh stated that his faults were being pardoned and that Jodhpur was being conferred on him on condition that he would serve the emperor and would attend the court with Zulfiqar Khan.²⁷ Bahadur Shah was keen that Maharaja Ajit Singh and Jai Singh should join him to meet the growing Sikh menace.²⁸ He was afraid of the collusion of the Rajput chiefs with the rebellious Sikhs and tried to resolve the deadlock quickly. Prince Azim Ush Shan, too, was keen on placating the Rajput chiefs since he banked upon the Rajput support in the contest for the seizure of the

²⁶ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.224

²⁷ B.N. Reu, "Some imperial Farman addressed to the rulers of Jodhpur", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1947, Vol.10 (1947) pp.350-357

²⁸ Chandra, *Parties*, p.37

throne after the demise of the emperor. The Nizam as well as Asad Khan also supported this policy. To The death of Wazir Munim Khan who was opposed to this made this easier.

But Maharaja Ajit Singh sought some time as he wanted to stay home for some time to establish order there. He as well as Maharaja Jai Singh were given leave for six months. In spite of repeated summons from the court, Maharaja Ajit Singh arrived at the court after much delay.²⁹ Pleading for the subadari of Malwa or Gujarat, Maharaja Ajit Singh wanted to keep his control over Sambhar and Didwana. He had not thus so far received any order regarding his *mansab* and hence he delayed his appearance in the Mughal court. This delay by Ajit Singh was not appreciated by Jai Singh who showed his inclination to attend the court, thereby leaving Ajit Singh alone to become the target of imperial displeasure. In the court, Bhandari Khisvi was repeatedly urging that Ajit Singh would be starting immediately. Ajit Singh was finally recognized as the ruler of Jodhpur and was granted the *mansab* of 4000/4500 and Jodhpur along with the Parganas of Sojat, Siwana and Phalodi. Outside Marwar, Ajit Singh was granted the faujdari of Sorath. Ajit Singh was not given Merta and it remained in khalisa.

Merta was kept under imperial control so that activities of Ajit Singh could be checked. But Merta did not remain in khalisa for a long time. Finding it difficult to maintain peace over it, Merta was granted to Ajit Singh in *ijara*. It is implied from the document that Ajit Singh would pay half of its jama to the emperor, and that it was not to be treated as one of the *jagirs* granted to Ajit Singh. This was a significant event in Rathore-Mughal relations. For the first time a Pargana was given in *ijara* to

²⁹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.39

the Raja who held the watandari claim over it. Although Ajit Singh was granted Jodhpur, the *mansab* granted to him was not commensurate with his ambitions. When the *mansab* was granted to Ajit Singh, he had control over all those Parganas in Marwar which were later on granted to him in *jagir*. Besides, he had control over Sambhar and Didwana. The *mansab* granted to him implied that he had to evacuate Sambhar and Didwana. However, Ajit Singh maintained his control over these two Parganas even after getting back Jodhpur. This indicates that Ajit Singh was discontented with the *mansab* and the *jagir* he held.

During the reign of Bahadur Shah, the demands of Ajit Singh could not be satisfied. Jai Singh met the same fate. Hence, their mutual association continued, though at the court their representatives were pleading that their interests were separate. After the death of Bahadur Shah the Mughal court politics went in favour of both the rajas. Jahandar Shah asked both of them to be present themselves for the royal audience.³⁰ Raghunath Bhandari and Bhikaridas diwans of Jodhpur and Amber respectively were honoured in the court and Ajit Singh was granted the subedari of Gujarat with the *mansab* of 8000/8000 and Jai Singh was granted subedari of Malwa with a *mansab* of 8000/7000.³¹ At the same time, Rathore Durgadas was also granted the *mansab* of 4000/3000 and Pargana of Idar in *jagir* on the recommendation of Zulfiqar Khan.³² The *mansab* and the assignment of the subadari of Gujarat and Malwa were highly appreciated at the court as well as in Jodhpur and Amber but it was not implemented due to death of Jahandar Shah. Thus the policy of Bahadur Shah was abandoned soon

³⁰ Sangwan, *Jodhpur*, p.35

³¹ Sangwan, *Jodhpur*, p.35

³² Sharma, *Rajput*, p.229

after his death. In the war of succession between Jahandar Shah and Farrukhsiyar, both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh didn't take any side.

Political Uncertainty at the Mughal Court and Activities of the Rajput Kings

The political uncertainty at the Mughal court enabled Ajit Singh to extend his influence over neighbouring states. Raj Singh, the ruler of Kisangarh, had taken sides with Azim-us-Shan against the emperor. After his arrival at Kisangarh, Raj Singh wrote to Ajit Singh to help him in case he was persecuted. Ajit Singh, considering that Raj Singh was his nephew, agreed to do so. But Raj Singh had to pay the price of this assurance. With the intention of bringing the adjoining territories under his control, Ajit Singh wrote to Raj Singh to come with an army. But Raj Singh did not pay any heed. Therefore conquering Banderwara, Bhinai and Vijaigarh, Maharaja Ajit Singh reached Deogarh. When he was camping at Deogarh he again called Raj Singh but the latter gave no response. Therefore, Ajit Singh invaded Kisangarh and took possession of it. At first Raj Singh offered a stiff resistance, but later on made submission and concluded an agreement with Ajit Singh according to which Ajit Singh incorporated some of his areas into his own territory. Taking advantage of the political instability at the Mughal court during the war of succession, Maharaja Ajit Singh delayed the evacuation of Sambhar and Didwana. Since the restoration of watan *jagirs* to Ajit Singh and Jai Singh, Asad Khan had written many times to Ajit Singh to remove his thanas from Sambhar and to hand over their control to imperial officers. It seems, Ajit Singh wanted to keep his control over Sambhar and Didwana till he had been assured of the intention of the emperor. Perhaps he was interested in retaining these Parganas in his *jagir* because he was not interested in getting his appointment of choice. It is

quite possible that by keeping his control over these areas he wanted to keep a good source of income with him.

After the death of Bahadur Shah, the Rajput Rajas continued their control over Sambhar and Didwana. Zulfiqar Khan adopted a more strict attitude over the control of these Parganas by the Rajput Rajas. This action of the Rajas, which amounted to disobedience, led to a political crisis. In these Parganas the Mughal emperor had assigned the *jagirs* to his *mansabdars* but none of them could get hold over them.³³ Zulfiqar Khan, after the accession of Jahandar Shah, strongly told the vakil of Maharaja Jai Singh that he should ask both the Rajas to remove their thanas immediately, otherwise they would be punished. The wazir warned that in case of an imperial march, Ajit Singh could save himself by taking shelter in the hill areas but Jai Singh would not get any place to hide. He also demanded that Jai Singh should persuade Ajit Singh to behave like a Raja and not like a dacoit. Later, after taking over the charge, the new vazir of Farrukh siyar, Saiyid Abdullab Khan, again asked Pancholi Jagiwan Ram to ask Jai Singh and Ajit Singh to remove the thanas from Sambhar.³⁴ Ajit Singh was also asked to deposit the amount which he had collected from the haweli of Ajmer. Ajit Singh did not take these instructions very seriously. He wanted the restoration of his *mansab* which was once promised to him. He also repeated his claim for the grant of the subadari of Gujarat or Malwa through his vakil Bhandari Khivsi. Maharaja Jai Singh also approached the emperor with a similar request.³⁵ While these claims were being pressed, Ajit Singh continued his offensive activities which caused great concern at the court. Maharaja Ajit Singh had been

³³ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.229

³⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.231

³⁵ Chandra, *Parties*, p.90

nursing for long the foul desire to kill Rathore Mohkam Singh who had been pressing his right for the gaddi of Jodhpur.

After the succession of Farrukhsiyar, Mohkam Singh repeated the old claim. In the meantime, Ajit Singh occupied Merta after the flight of Indra Singh who was then staying there. The occupation of Merta was clearly a violation of the conditions on which it had been given to Ajit Singh by Bahadur Shah. Indra Singh complained to the emperor and repeated his claim over Jodhpur.³⁶ Although the emperor did not give much weight to the claim of Indra Singh, it became necessary for him to check the activities of Ajit Singh. Ajit Singh got Mohkam Singh killed, while he was on a visit to Abdullah Khan. It is difficult to determine the exact motives behind Ajit Singh's aggressive activities, it seems that he wanted to demonstrate his power and compel the emperor to concede his demand. However, a study of the reports sent by Pancholi Jagjiwan Ram to jai Singh, shows that as early as June 1713, Farrukh Siyar had accepted the claims of the two Rajas over their respective watan *jagirs*. The question of granting them *jagirs* outside their watan territories was delayed as Abdullah Khan wanted a reassessment of their *jagirs*. It was, therefore, stressed that an assignment to the Rajas of the *jagirs* outside their watans could be made only after they had submitted a statement of the jama of their respective Parganas. The vakils of Jodhpur and Amber on the other hand held that the assignments should be made on the basis of the old jama figures. This was the main cause of contention. The attempt for a reassessment of the watan *jagirs* may also be looked upon as a part of the *jagirdari* crisis. The practice of assigning *jagirs* on the basis of the old jama practice of assigning *jagirs* on the basis of the old jama figures would have compelled the wazir

³⁶ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.231

to grant additional *jagirs* to the Rajas outside their watans which the Mughal court was reluctant to do. Pancholi Biharidas, the vakil of Jai Singh at the Mughal court, was able to persuade the emperor to confer the title of Mirza Raja Sawai on Jai Singh in July 1713.³⁷

Politically, it was a significant development in the policy of Farrukh Siyar as no such favour was shown the Ajit Singh. The reasons for the failure of Ajit Singh to get an equal consideration were his marauding activities which caused great concern at the court. Khivsi Bhandari while pleading the cause of Ajit Singh for a high *mansab* and *jagirs* was, however, able to establish close relations with the Saiyids. But the Saiyids and the emperor created a rift between Ajit Singh and Jai Singh. This allowed the emperor to take advantage of the situation. It was decided that Ajit Singh and Jai Singh should not be appointed to contiguous subas. In the month of October 1713, Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were restored the *mansab* of 7000/7000, and were granted the subadaris of Thatta and Malwa respectively. Maharaja Ajit Singh refused to accept the subadari of Thatta.

The disobedience of Ajit Singh in accepting the imperial order gave additional support to the anti-Ajit Singh attitude of Farrukh Siyar who was annoyed with him due to the murder of Mohkam Singh, and his delay in evacuating Sambhar and Didwana. To settle the score with Ajit Singh, Farrukh Siyar sent an army against Marwar in 1714 under the command of Saiyid Husain Ali.³⁸ A letter addressed to Maharaja Jai Singh by Jagjiwan Das indicates that even before Husain Ali Khan's arrival at Merta, Maharaja Ajit Singh had come to an understanding with him. Husain Ali showed favour to him by stating that the murder of Mhkam Singh was not done at

³⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.231

³⁸ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.231

the instance of Ajit Singh.³⁹ Knowing the favourable inclination of Husain Ali towards him and the group politics of the Mughal court, Ajit Singh tried to win his sympathy. He showed him the letters written by the emperor promising him favours if he fought and defeated Husain Ali. Hence, no battle took place and in March 1714, a treaty was concluded between Husain Ali Khan and Ajit Singh. According to it, the latter submitted to Husain Ali and in proof of his loyalty agreed to marry his daughter to Farrukh Siyar. A *mansab* of 7000/7000 was conferred on him together with the *faujdar*i of Thatta. His son Abhay Singh was also granted a *mansab* and *faujdar*i of Sorath. Significantly, according to this treaty Maharaja Ajit Singh agreed to follow the earlier order of the emperor to go to Sorath which he had not followed.

It is said that apart from the official declaration, Husain Ali Khan and Ajit Singh concluded a secret pact according to which the former promised that Ajit Singh would be appointed to the subadari of Gujarat as soon as he had marched towards Thatta, thus publicly demonstrating his obedience to the imperial orders.⁴⁰ His demand for all the Parganas which had been under Jaswant Singh was practically conceded. The question of reassessment of the Parganas of Marwar was also dropped, and the *jagirs* were given on the basis of the old jama figures. It is noteworthy that the same concessions had already been made to Jai Singh when Amber was conferred upon him along with other Parganas in his watan in October 1713. During this period the relations between Ajit Singh and Jai Singh became strained. They differed on the question of Sambhar and Didwana. It has been mentioned above that Maharaja Jai Singh made it clear to Abdullah Khan that the delay in handling over the charge of these Parganas was due to Ajit Singh who held control over them. It is apparent that

³⁹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.90

⁴⁰ Chandra, *Parties*, p.90

Maharaja Jai Singh was no longer interested in opposing the Mughals jointly with Ajit Singh if the emperor agreed to appoint him the subadar of Gujarat or Malwa. This fact became more obvious when after his appointment in Malwa, Jai Singh left Ajit Singh alone to face the Mughal army. In fact, Jai Singh joined the Mughal army sent against Ajit Singh.⁴¹

The favour shown to Jai Singh by granting the subadari of Malwa led to his disassociation from Ajit Singh. Since the succession of Farrukh Siyar, Jai Singh remained neutral and did not associate himself with the activities of Ajit Singh. The appointment of Ajit Singh as the subadar of Gujarat was made on the recommendation of the Saiyid brothers and therefore his association with them became quite intimate. But Maharaja Jai Singh, who had succeeded in getting the subadari of Malwa through Khan-i-Dauran, had direct access to the emperor. Thus, while Jai Singh associated himself with Farrukh Siyar, Ajit Singh became a partisan of the Saiyids.

Ajit Singh and Jai Singh: Friends and Foes

The growing animosity between Jai Singh and Ajit Singh was due not only to the factional rivalry at the Mughal court but also because both of them wanted to extend their influence over Rajputana. Ajit Singh felt that he had been deprived of Sambhar and Didwana due to Jai Singh, who put all the responsibility of disobeying the imperial orders on him in order to gain goodwill at the Mughal Court. With the support of the Saiyid brothers, Ajit Singh retained his *mansab* of 7000/7000 and apart from the subadari of Gujarat, held the Parganas of Sojat, Jaitaran, Phalodi. Siwana,

⁴¹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.394

Merta and Gajsinghpur along with Jodhpur.⁴² Ajit Singh now took advantage of the situation prevailing at the Mughal court in expanding to Gujarat he occupied Bhinmal and Jalor which had been in the Rathore domain during the time of Maharaja Jaswant Singh. Before leaving for Ahmedabad, Ajit Singh had also ordered Pemsî Bhandari to conquer Nagaur. Pemsî invaded Nagaur and seized it. Indra Singh's defeat was certain, since he no longer enjoyed imperial support. His sardars started defecting in favour of the Jodhpur army. Even though the fort of Nagaur had fallen, the Champawat sardars, Bhagwandas Jogidasot, etc., were of the opinion that Indra Singh should not be killed.⁴³ At their instance Indra Singh was allowed to evacuate the fort and take shelter at the Mughal court. There, he again began to poison the ears of the emperor against the Maharaja, but this time he was not able to achieve much success.

The emperor granted Nagaur to Ajit Singh in February 1717. The acceptance of the right of Ajit Singh over Nagaur was a significant factor in the consolidation of the Rathore power. Ajit Singh's control now extended over the areas which were once dominated by the Rathore clan. The political crisis at the Mughal court and the participation of Ajit Singh with the Saiyid brothers in dislodging Farrukh Siyar provided further opportunity to the former for extending his influence over the Rajput states as well as at the court. After the assassination of Farrukh Siyar in February 1719, Ajit Singh gained the most advantageous position. He was granted the subadari of both Ajmer and Gujarat. From a contemporary account, it appears that the award of the *mansabs* granted to Ajit Singh, his sons and other Rathore sardars, was a high watermark in the history of Marwar as well as of other Rajput states. A study of the *mansab* and the amount of the salary sanctioned against Ajit Singh's *mansab*,

⁴² Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.394

⁴³ Shivdat danBarahath, *Ajit Vilas*, RORI, Jodhpur, 1984.

indicates that the amount was fixed on the same principles which were followed during the time of Aurangzeb. Apart from the *jagirs* in Marwar, Ajit Singh was granted *jagirs* outside Marwar also. The most significant feature was the increase in the number of Marwar sardars which rose from seven, holding the imperial *mansabs* in the reign of Jaswant Singh, to forty four. Even in 1697 when Aurangzeb had granted *mansabs* to Ajit Singh and Durgadas, the total number was eight including Durgadas himself.

After being secured from the side of the Mughal court, Ajit Singh further tried to extend his power in Rajputana. Although he had been appointed subadar of Gujarat and the deteriorating political and administrative conditions required his presence there and in spite of the fact that Abdullah Khan repeatedly wrote to him about this, he paid no heed. Ajit Singh had tried to help Jai Singh in retaining the gaddi of Amber. Since the latter had been hostile to the Saiyids, and had given shelter to his opponents, Saiyid Abdullah Khan marched towards Ajmer along with emperor Rafu-ud-Daulah and Ajit Singh with the intention of dislodging Jai Singh from gaddi of Amber.⁴⁴ The Rajasthani chronicles record that Maharaja Ajit Singh interceded on behalf of Jai Singh and that it was due to his persuasion tht Abdullah Khan agreed to pardon Jai Singh. The Saiyids showed their generosity and granted Jai Singh a large sum of money and the faujdari of Sorath. At a meeting with Jai Singh at Kaladera in 1719 Ajit Singh tried to strengthen the bonds of good-will between Jai Singh and the Saiyids.⁴⁵ Later, Maharaja Jai Singh accompanied by Ajit Singh reached Jodhpur in 1719. While staying there, Jai Singh was married to the daughter of Ajit Singh, the

⁴⁴ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.395

⁴⁵ Barahath, *Ajit Vilas*

celebration being performed in 1720.⁴⁶ The matrimonial relationship between the two houses was also in the interest of the Saiyids who wanted to win Jai Singh over to their side. But it would be wrong to presume that by entering into a matrimonial alliance with Jai Singh, Ajit Singh wanted to form a united front of the Rajput Rajas. Perhaps he was motivated by a desire to use the alliance with Jai Singh to consolidate his position in Ajmer. That is why even after the marriage ceremony, he avoided departure for Gujarat, despite pressing letters from Saiyid Abdullah Khan. Jai Singh on his part was also clear about the intention of Ajit Singh and continued intriguing with the opponents of the Saiyids. In spite of cordiality established between the two Rajas, Jai Singh secured the clandestine support of emperor Mohammad Shah. Maharaja Jai Singh was not satisfied with the position granted to him by the Saiyids. Although he held the *mansab* which has been his long demand, and the faujdari of Sorath, he could not forego the subadari of Malwa, which he had held during Farrukh Siyar reign.

Abdullah Khan sent Jai Singh a letter through Ajit Singh, conveying the grant of the subadari of Malwa, he ignored the order of the wazir since it would have embroiled him with Nizamul-Mulk, the subadar of Malwa. Jai Singh had no faith in Saiyid Abdullah Khan. At the same time, he could not ignore the influence of Ajit Singh which was increasing day by day. A study of the letters written by Jai Singh to the Maharana, the rulers of Bikaner, Kota and Indra Singh, reveals that he was trying to rally these Rajput Rajas in favour of Mohammad Shah and against Saiyid Abdullah Khan.⁴⁷ However, none of them responded to the suggestion of Jai Singh. Raja Sujan

⁴⁶ Barahath, *Ajit Vilas*

⁴⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.237

Singh of Bikaner expressed apprehension of the encroachment by Ajit Singh on Bikaner as the latter had advanced to Nagaur. The ruler of Bikaner was also engaged in internal problems caused by factions in his nobility. The Maharana of Mewar was not approached to extend open support to Mohammad Shah since it would have led to friction with Ajit Singh who was openly supporting the cause of the Saiyids. Similarly, the ruler of Kota was also not in a position to extend any kind of open support to the emperor. Under these circumstances, Maharaja Jai Singh, without waiting for the return of Ajit Singh, left Jodhpur and reached Jahanabad.

Sawai Jai Singh aimed at achieving local hegemony over Rajputana as he saw it as the means of restoring peace here. He emerged as the protector and mediator of these states as is evident from the many letters from the rulers of Kota, Bundi, Jodhpur and even Mewar. He became the bridge between the Rajput states and the emperor and all petitions to the emperor was submitted through him. The emperor promised to act only according to the recommendations made by Jai Singh. With the murder of Husain Ali Khan and imprisonment of Abdullah Khan the scenario changed completely. This had a direct impact on Ajit Singh who was then the most influential Rajput *mansabdar* at the Mughal court. Till then, he had retained the subadari of Gujarat and had appointed Bhandari Anup Singh as his naib there. When the news of the defeat of Abdullah Khan was known to Ajit Singh, he proceeded to Ajmer and made defensive arrangements.⁴⁸

Ajit Singh knew it well that due to the change in the court politics, he would not be allowed to continue as the subadar of both Gujarat and Ajmer. This proved true when soon after the defeat of Abdullah Khan, he was removed from the subadari of Gujarat

⁴⁸ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.239

and Ajmer.⁴⁹ In retaliation, he started plundering the imperial territory and sent out price Abhay Singh and Bhandari Raghunath towards Sambhar. Likewise, the armies of the Maharaja got hold of Didwana, Toda, Jhadod, Bhinai and Amarsar. In the meantime, Mohan Singh Jat, son of Churaman Jat, reached Sambhar where he was given shelter by Ajit Singh. Abhay Singh now marched towards Narnol. At first Bayazit Khan Mewati, the faujdar of Narnol tried to oppose him, but he had to retreat to Mewat as he could not withstand the onslaught of the Rathore forces. Abhay Singh, after sacking Narnol, plundered *Tijara* and Shahjahanpur. Maharaja Ajit Singh also tried to gain control over Bikaner, but he failed in his efforts. However, he conquered the areas like Naguar, Ajmer, Toda, Sambhar etc. These activities of Ajit Singh were a direct challenge to the imperial authority. Khan-i-Dauran suggested that Ajit Singh should continue as the subadar of Gujarat on the condition that he evacuated Ajmer. This suggestion could have avoided the imperial march against Ajit Singh, but it was not accepted due to the opposition of Haidar Quili Khan and others. It would be wrong to presume that Ajit Singh's intention was to remove the Mughals from Rajputana or the emperor from his position. He was only repeating his old policy of demonstrating his strength in order to force the emperor to accept his terms and conditions.

The offensive launched by him created suspicions against his motives. None of the imperial subadar could control Ajmer due to resistance by Ajit Singh. The determination of the emperor to force Ajit Singh to evacuate Ajmer and the other imperial territories, ultimately changed his attitude and compelled him to withdraw to Jodhpur from Ajmer in leaving his man there. He also sent an arzadast to the emperor seeking pardon for his faults and pleading for the retention of Ajmer. The departure of

⁴⁹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.93

Ajit Singh from Ajmer after leaving behind his troops, indicated clearly that he was confident of retaining the subadari of that province.⁵⁰ But the appointment of Nahar Khan as diwan of Ajmer and faujdar of Sambhar in December 1722 renewed the hostility of Ajit Singh who did not allow him to secure control over Ajmer and got him murdered when he entered the territory of Ajmer. In 1722, the Jats under Churaman's son Mohakam Singh again rebelled against the Mughal government. Jai Singh was given the area belonging to Churaman's sons as his Tankhah *jagir*. Hence Jai Singh made Badan Singh a Zamindar on behalf of the emperor. The position of Badan Singh and other vassals of Raja Jai Singh was quite different. Badan Singh was not a vassal in the territory of Raja Jaipur but he was granted a Zamindari in Khalsa territory of the Mughal Empire. Raja Jai Singh was only an intermediary between the emperor and Badan Singh. It was only in this form that Badan Singh became the subordinate of Sawai Jai Singh.⁵¹

The emperor Muhammad Shah sent Jai Singh to suppress him. Jai Singh with the help of Mohakam's cousin, Badan Singh, was able to drive the rebel out from Thun and seat Badan Singh as the chief of the Jats. Thereafter, Badan Singh remained ever grateful and royal to Jai Singh, and peace was restored in this region after decades of unrest. Earlier, Ajit Singh had extended his support to Churaman Jat of Bharatpur by dispatching a contingent against Jai Singh, but later on, he withdrew this support. After the defeat of Churaman Jat he renewed his contact with Mohkam Singh Jat to whom he had given shelter.

These acts of Ajit Singh not only enraged the emperor but also showed his enmity against Jai Singh. Obviously, Ajit Singh was not in favour of the expansion of Jai

⁵⁰ Chandra, *Parties*, p.93

⁵¹ Ram Pande, "Relations between Badan Singh and Sawai Jai Singh(1722-42)", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1968, Vol.30 (1968), pp.185-189.

Singh's influence over Jat territory but he could do nothing to help Mohkam Singh Jat to regain his territory. Reacting to these actions of Ajit Singh, emperor Mohammad Shah appointed Sharf-ud-Daulah as the commander of a huge army to be sent against him. The emperor also ordered Haider Quli Khan, Jai Singh, Girdhar Bahadur, etc., to help the imperial army. A farman sent to Jai Singh says that Ajit Singh, the fake child of Jaswant Singh, had been pardoned several times for his offences, but had again shown his obduracy and raised his head. The wretch had blackened his face by murdering Shaikh Nahar Khan. Hence Jai Singh was ordered to reach Narnol at the earliest, either alone or in the company of Mohammad Khan Bahadur.

Ajit Singh left a Rathore contingent to face the imperial army and was not prepared for a direct conflict with the imperial army and the stay of the Rathore army at Ajmer was merely a show. He then started making efforts to conclude peace with the emperor through Jai Singh. Although Jai Singh had doubts about the motives of Ajit Singh, as the former had occupied some of the parts of his territory also, he took lead in settling the matters. Prince Abhay Singh appeared before Haider Quli Khan with the arzadast of Ajit Singh, according to which the former was to have an audience with the emperor for his pardon.⁵² An agreement was concluded in June 1723 according to which the Maharaja agreed to surrender the territories which he had occupied by force. Nagaur was granted to Indra Singh. Although Ajit Singh was restored to the *mansab* of 7000/7000, he had to send Abhay Singh to court in order to pacify the emperor.⁵³ The question of his appointment as subadar, however, remained pending. He was deprived of the territory he had held outside Marwar. The conditions to which Ajit Singh had to agree were humiliating for him and isolated him in the

⁵² Barahath, *Ajit Vilas*

⁵³ Barahath, *Ajit Vilas*

Mughal politics. The actually happened due to the presence of Abhay Singh at the Mughal court who was tipped by the emperor to assume the gaddi of Jodhpur. Jai Singh had played an important role in restoring peace in Marwar.

The emperor in alliance with Jai Singh looked for an opportunity to have Ajit Singh killed and thus become free from anxiety. The emperor began to develop close relations with prince Abhay Singh through Jai Singh. He won over Bhandari Raghunath who was told that the emperor was the most influential noble of Marwar. Prince Abhay Singh was told that the emperor was not happy with Ajit Singh and, therefore, it would be in the interest of his ancestral land if he succeeded the idea. A letter with the signature of Abhay Singh was secretly sent to Bakht Singh, younger brother of Abhay Singh. In this letter, he was advised to kill the old Maharaja for the sake of the safety of the state. Jai Singh's role in the murder of Ajit Singh has been a matter of controversy. The active military aid extended by Jai Singh to Abhay Singh and the subsequent marriage with his daughter soon after the event create suspicion of his complicity.⁵⁴ It was popularly believed that Abhay Singh, Bakht Singh, Bhandari Raghunath were all in league with Jal Singh in the murder of Ajit Singh. The events witnessed some important change in the external politics of Marwar.

Bakht Singh was surprised at this and did not know what to do but ultimately became inclined to do what was asked of him. Bakht Singh was also assured that he would be given independent control of Nagaur. Accordingly, on 23 June 1724 Maharaja Ajit Singh was assassinated by his younger son, Bakht Singh. The rule of Ajit Singh ended with an unprecedented tragedy which later caused a civil war in Marwar. Muhammad Shah, put the tika on the forehead of Abhay Singh conferring on him the gaddi of

⁵⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.240

Jodhpur along with 14 Parganas of Marwar and a *mansab* of 7000/7000.⁵⁵ Abhay Singh also maintaining good relations with Raja Jai Singh. Abhay Singh was instructed to proceed to Gujarat but due to the trouble created by Rai Singh and Anand Singh, he failed to comply with the imperial order. He had been posted under Sarbuland Khan and was granted leave only for a month. The non compliance of the imperial order irked the emperor but he was not in a position to take any action against Abhya Singh.

Ishwari Singh, as the eldest surviving son of Sawai Jai Singh, assumed the crown of Jaipur, and his succession was recognized by the emperor Muhammad Shah. Jai Singh's only son by the Mewar princess was Madho Singh who was to become the ruler as per the agreement between Jaipur and Mewar. The fight for the gaddi started between the two. Ishwari Singh secured Maratha aid to tackle the threat from Madho Singh. The Deccanis were made arbiters of the throne of Jaipur, as the result of this fratricidal war.⁵⁶ While the Peshwa had been hired by Ishwari Singh, the Maharana approached Malhar Holkar. The imperial authority no longer had any meaningful role to play in the affairs of Rajputana. The Marathas now were the force to reckon with.

⁵⁵ Ramkaran, *Rajroopak*, p.58

⁵⁶ Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan Through the ages*, p.182

CHAPTER FOUR

Maratha Incursions, Inter-State Relations, and Political

Change in Rajput States

The relationship among different Rajput states took a new shape after the death of Aurangzeb. They sensed an opportunity to regain and reclaim the territories which they had lost during the heyday of the empire. Various Rajput Rajas maintained close contact with one another for this purpose. But the co-operation among the Rajput Rajas was mainly motivated by their personal interests. On the face of it they maintained friendly relations but underneath there was mistrust and intrigues. There were frequent alliances and ruptures among them. There has always been a tendency on the part of the Rajput rulers to seek support from others to solve their issues. During this period the help of the Marathas was sought by the disgruntled section of the ruling class.

Unity among the Rajput Rulers

Ajit Singh and Jai Singh tried to take advantage of the situation arising out of the war of succession after the death of Aurangzeb. In pursuit of their goals both the rulers planned their strategies sometimes with one another and sometimes against one another. Their alliance fragile and many a times the alliance partner worked at cross purposes. Bahadur Shah deprived Jai Singh of his watan, Amber, on the plea that there was a dispute for between the two brothers, Jai Singh and Vijay Singh. Both Jai Singh and Vijay Singh were having different patrons at the Mughal court.¹ As we have seen the court politics became increasingly complex and the fortunes changed

¹ Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan Through the ages*, p.87

very frequently. The Kachhawaha kingdom was given to Vijay Singh. The name of the town was also changed to Islamabad and a new faujdar Saiyid Ahmad Khan Barah was sent there. Amber had been in their Possession for a long time and such order had never been issued before. Jai Singh sought advice from the Maharana. The ruling house of Mewar enjoyed a highly respectable position in the Rajputana. Jai Singh reposed his full faith in him and wrote to him that 'for me, what you say is final'.² Jai Singh also sought help from Ajit Singh but neither Ajit Singh nor Amar Singh responded favourably to him. After the failure to get any support from them Maharaja Jai Singh wrote a letter to Durgadas Rathore and requested him to intercede on his behalf.³ He also didn't do anything to help Maharaja Jai Singh.

At the time of Aurangzeb's death, Ajit Singh was an imperial *mansabdar*. He occupied Jodhpur without the permission of the emperor. But the arrival of emperor Bahadur Shah at Ajmer left no other alternative before Ajit Singh but to offer his submission to the emperor. The loss of their watan was an emotional issue for both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh decided to get their goals fulfilled by advocating their own cases and even by bribing the imperial officers. If it didn't work they were to detach from the imperial army.⁴ Ajit Singh favoured united action against the Mughals only when he himself was dislodged from Jodhpur. Initially both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh tried to get their watan by placating the Mughal authority. Both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh expected that the emperor would restore their watan *jagirs* soon but the attitude of the Mughal emperor forced the two Rajas to come to an understanding. They now decided to take a different course of action and abruptly broke away from the imperial

² Letter of Jai Singh to Amar Singh II as quoted in Sangwan, R.S, Jodhpur and later Mughals, Pragati Publication, Delhi, 2007, pg-8.

³ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.220

⁴ Sangwan, *Jodhpur*, p.4

army. This was a very important departure from the earlier practice and the imperial authority was challenged directly.

They also decided to take help from other Rajput rulers also and first went Ujjain and then to Pratapgarh. They were received well at both places by Badan Singh and Thakur Pratap Singh respectively. Rao Budh Singh of Budni also decided to support both Rajput rajas. It seems that Budh Singh had sympathy with Jai Singh as the latter had married his sister to Jai Singh. Jai Singh reposed full faith in Maharana Amar Singh who received Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas very well.⁵ On the basis of Jodhpur-Khyat it is generally affirmed that at Udaipur the three Raja decided not only to recover their watan but also to bring the whole of Hindustan under their control.⁶ When Ajit Singh and Jai Singh accompanied by Durgadas reached Mewar, the Rana received them warmly. He also gave his daughter in marriage to Jai Singh. This was very significant event as the Kacchwahas were accepted as saga by Mewar. The marriage was performed on the condition that the son born out of this marriage would ascend the gaddi of Jaipur and if a daughter was born, she would not be married to any musalmaan.⁷ This agreement later became a bone of contention between the two states. It seems that after having failed to persuade the emperor, they decided to get the help of the Rana. The Rana got an opportunity to get into prominence by playing the role of a mediator.⁸

The might of the Mughal empire was still so powerful that the Maharana after receiving a Nishan from Jahandar Shah in which he was asked not to assist the two Rajput rulers, but to send their arzis to the emperor for pardon decided to do the same.

⁵ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

⁶ Bhargav, *Marwar*, p.149

⁷ Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, p.30

⁸ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

In their arzis to the court Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas sought forgiveness for leaving the court without permission. Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were waiting for a favourable response even after their flight from the imperial camp. The Rana was using his own influence for getting back their watans. But failing to get any encouraging reply from the side of the emperor they decided to regain their watan lands by force. They entered Jodhpur and Ajit Singh was coronated. Jai Singh put the tika on Ajit Singh.⁹ He also accepted the invitation to marry the daughter of Ajit Singh. Jai Singh also wrote letters to Maratha ruler Shahu and Bundela leader Chatrashal.

Cracks in the Unity

The unity of the Rajput rulers was exposed soon as Rana Amar Singh himself did not participate in it and sent a Mewari contingent only. He didn't want to antagonise the imperial authority and at the same time wanted to be with the Rajput rulers. Further Ajit Singh after the occupation of Jodhpur, made no haste to march against Amber and help Jai Singh. Earlier during the time of the Rathore rebellion, Jaipur had followed the policy of neutrality and thus lent a passive support to Aurangzeb. The military help rendered by the Rana and the participation of Durgadas Rathore were aimed at achieving their personal objective rather than challenging the Mughal authority. Despite the mistrust between Ajit Singh and Ji Singh, the control over Amber was secured and the Mughal faujdar, Husain Khan Baraha, was forced to leave.¹⁰ After this achievement Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas assembled at Pushkar to decide the future course of action. Here it was decided that the Rana should also come and participate. The success brought them together but this coming

⁹ Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, p.35

¹⁰ Chandra, *Parties*, p.31

together was tentative. It was also doubtful that the Rana himself would help Jai Singh and Ajit Singh against the Mughals. This actually happened in the war of Sambhar. The unity among them was always in doubt as each one of them was looking for his own personal gains. Both the Rajas and Durgadas Rathore proceeded towards Sambhar. Saiyid Husain Khan, with his brothers, the faujdars of Merta and Narnol, challenged them at Sambhar. In the battle of Sambhar Saiyid Husain Khan and his brothers were killed and the Rajputs gained the victory.

Ajit Singh and Jai Singh stayed at Sambhar for a few weeks to make necessary administrative arrangements. It was agreed that the revenue of the conquered territory would be equally divided between the two. Both of them shared the responsibility of administration equally. Maharaja Ajit Singh appointed the son of Bhandari Khivsi as *hakim* and Jagram as the *kotwal*. The purpose of making these administrative arrangements was to keep joint control over that territory for a long period. Ajit Singh after making some security arrangements at Sambhar, proceeded to Jodhpur.¹¹ He did not spend much time in Jodhpur and after effecting necessary administrative changes, marched against Nagaur. In 1709 Ajit Singh left Jodhpur and reached Merta from where he was to march on Ajmer.

Jai Singh changed his course of action very soon. Jai Singh had earlier promised to march from Amber to Ajmer but he decided to adopt a conciliatory path to meet his goal. Jai Singh delayed his plans to arrive at Ajmer as he was having negotiations with the Imperial authorities. Amber's wakil, Jagjiwan das was carrying on negotiations with Mughal officers and pleaded through prince Azim-us-shan and Sarbuland Khan. The negotiations failed as the Kachhwaha territory didn't include the

¹¹ Ramkaran, *Rajroopak*, p.195

kasba of Amber. After having failed Jai Singh wrote to the Sikh leader Banda Singh for armed assistance. Banda Singh promised to co-operate provided Ajit also agreed to this plan. Owing to an estrangement since the battle of Sambhar, Jai Singh did not think it advisable to carry negotiations with Ajit Singh.

The possibility of any alliance involving non Rajput powers was curtailed due to the mistrust among the Rajput rulers. The Mughal authority also tried to effect a divide among the Rajput rulers. Nizam Mulk tried to avert the Rajput-Sikh coalition and chose the path of diplomacy rather than that of armed confrontation with the Rajputs.¹² He tried to win over Jai Singh with the grant of a *mansab* of 3500/3000 and the Parganas of Amber, Phagi and Dausa and a *Jagir* worth thirty five lakhs. Jai Singh on his part sent Dewan Bihari Das and Har Charan Pancholi to carry on the negotiations with the imperial authority.

The Mughal court politics led to frequent changes at the imperial level which had a direct impact on the Rajput states. Ignoring all the promises that were made earlier, the newly appointed Nazim Saiyyid Abdullah Khan marched towards Ajmer. This forced Jai Singh who was following the path of negotiation till now, to seek support from Maharana and Ajit Singh. He urged Maharana Amar Singh as well as Ajit Singh to make a concerted move to check the advance of Saiyyid Abdullah Khan who did not happen to be sympathetic to their cause. The unity of the Rajput rulers was again exposed as the Maharana appeared evasive. Ajit Singh readily agreed to mobilise. Subsequent to his arrival at Merta, Ajit Singh awaited for the march of Jai Singh. Jai Singh promised to move when Ajit Singh proceeded ahead from Merta. Accordingly,

¹² Tikkiwal, *Jaipur*, p.28

Ajit Singh continued his march and besieged Shujaat Khan, the Mughal Subedar, for a fortnight and made him to pay a hefty amount.

The defeat led to the change of Nazim and Nizam ul Mulk as Nazim was appointed in place of Shujaat Khan. Jai Singh again changed his course of action and tried to use his good relations with Nizam ul Mulk. He again tried to plead his case before the emperor. Nizam ul Mulk was apprehensive of the activities of Ajit Singh. To reaffirm his loyalty Jai Singh presented two ashrafis and two horses with golden harness to the emperor. The emperor accepted the present of ashrafis only and granted Jaisinghpura to him. Having failed to make any gain through Nizam ul Mulk, Jai Singh then opened negotiations through Shujaat Khan. Shujat Khan praised Jai Singh for his non-cooperation with the Rathores and for Persuading Ajit Singh to return from Ajmer. The emperor got ready to increase of 500 only in the *mansab* of Jai Singh and the grant of Pargana Deoti as enjoyed by him during the reign of Aurangzeb. Jai Singh was not willing to accept such a degraded status.¹³ The activities of Jai Singh were in contrast to the activities of Ajit Singh.

Having failed in his endeavour Jai Singh again changed his way and decided to organise a united front against the Imperial forces. Till the time the negotiations were going on, Jai Singh avoided attacking the imperial thanas as he was hopeful of securing favour from the emperor. the Rajput rulers persisted in Pleading their cases before the emperor through the Maharana as well as through their respective vakils at the court. At the same time they also decided to invade imperial territory to exert pressure on them. Ajit Singh also to invited the Maharana to invade the imperial territory. Both Jai Singh and Ajit Singh were suspicious of one another. While Ajit

¹³ Tikkiwal, *Jaipur*, p.28

Singh was in favour of show of Strength, Jai Singh favoured the conciliatory approach. At the Mughal court there was no consensus regarding the policy to be adopted. A powerful section of the nobility led by Asad Khan, had a sympathetic attitude towards these Rajput Rajas.¹⁴

The vakils of both the rulers were also trying through their patrons at the court. The wakil of Maharaja Ajit Singh at the court was engaged in negotiations with emperor Bahadur Shah through prince Azim-us-Shan. The wakil of Maharaja Jai Singh was repeatedly asking the latter to come to the court immediately without waiting for Maharaja Ajit Singh. Jai Singh expressed his desire to appear in the court without any delay.¹⁵ This again makes it clear that both the rulers were not on the same boat in their dealing with the imperial authority. The rebellions in different parts of the empire compelled them to adopt lenient attitude towards the Rajput rulers. Bahadur Shah was keen that Maharaja Ajit Singh and Jai Singh should join him to meet the growing Sikh menace.¹⁶ Jodhpur was to be conferred upon Ajit Singh on the condition that he would serve the emperor and would attend the court.

The difference in the approach between Ajit Singh and Jai Singh was very clear. Ajit Singh was to continue with aggressive activities whereas Jai Singh was not in favour of this. The former sought some time as he wanted to stay home for some time to establish order there. He as well as Maharaja Jai Singh were given leave for six months. In spite of repeated summons from the court, Maharaja Ajit Singh arrived at the court after much delay.¹⁷ Pleading for the subadari of Malwa or Gujarat, Maharaja Ajit Singh wanted to keep his control over Sambhar and Didwana. He had not thus so

¹⁴ Chandra, *Parties*, p.35

¹⁵ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.224

¹⁶ Chandra, *Parties*, p.37

¹⁷ Chandra, *Parties*, p.39

far received any order regarding his *mansab* and hence he delayed his appearance in the Mughal court. This delay by Ajit Singh was not appreciated by Jai Singh who showed his inclination to attend the court immediately but Ajit Singh was able to force the imperial authority to make concessions to him. Even after getting back Jodhpur, Ajit Singh maintained his control over Sambhar and Didwana which he had to evacuate as per the grant. Ajit Singh did not wait for Jai Singh for a long time and reached Ajmer and besieged the provincial capital for fifteen days. The Mughal subadar, Shujat Khan, agreed to pay a hefty amount whereupon Ajit Singh returned to Jodhpur.¹⁸ He decided to adopt a conciliatory path to meet his goal on the advice of Asad Khan. Ajit Singh continued with the same approach and reoccupied Ajmer within a month of the death of Bahadur Shah. Jahandar Shah, in order to appease him, appointed him Subedar of Gujrat.

The political uncertainty at the Mughal court enabled Ajit Singh to extend his influence over neighbouring states. He invaded Kisangarh and took possession of it. Raj Singh concluded an agreement with Ajit Singh according to which Ajit Singh incorporated some of his areas into his own territory. Asad Khan had written many times to Ajit Singh to remove his thanas from Sambhar and to hand over their control to imperial officers but he didn't comply with the imperial orders. Perhaps he was interested in retaining these Parganas in his *jagir* because he was not interested in getting his appointment of choice. In these Parganas the Mughal emperor had assigned the *jagirs* to his *mansabdars* but none of them could get hold over them.¹⁹

¹⁸ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.397

¹⁹ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.397

Mughal Authority and the Rift between the Rajput Kings

The wazir, Zulfiqar Khan tried to create rift between the two Rajas. Jai Singh was warned that in case of an imperial march, Ajit Singh could save himself by taking shelter in the hill areas but Jai Singh would not get any place to hide. The new wazir adopted a more strict attitude towards the Rajput Rajas. The wazir of Farrukh Siyar, Saiyid Abdullab Khan, also adopted the same policy and again asked Ajit Singh to remove the thanas from Sambhar.²⁰ Ajit Singh was also asked to deposit the amount which he had collected from the haweli of Ajmer. Ajit Singh did not take these instructions very seriously. He wanted the restoration of his *mansab* which was once promised to him. He also repeated his claim for the grant of the subadari of Gujarat or Malwa. Jai Singh also approached the emperor with a similar request.²¹ While these claims were being pressed, Ajit Singh continued his offensive activities which were a direct challenge to the imperial authority. Ajit Singh got Mohkam Singh killed while he was on a visit to Abdullah Khan.

The imperial authority made use of the suspicion between the two Rajas and the emperor conferred the title of Mirza Raja Sawai on Jai Singh.²² It was a significant development in the policy of Farrukh Siyar as no such favour was shown the Ajit Singh. The difference in approach of the two rajas was the main reason for this. The wakil of Ajit Singh prevailed upon the imperial authotity to meet the demands of his raja and it was decided that Ajit Singh and Jai Singh should not be appointed to contiguous subas. Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were restored the *mansab* of 7000/7000, and were granted the subadaris of Thatta and Malwa respectively. Maharaja Ajit

²⁰ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.231

²¹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.90

²² Chandra, *Parties*, p.90

Singh refused to accept the subadari of Thatta. Farrukhsiyar appointed Jai Singh viceroy of Malwa. On his way to Malwa he settled the dispute between his protege Budh Singh and his cousin Bhim Singh at Bundi. He had to face the Marathas and the Afghans.

The might of the Mughal empire was still too heavy for the Rajput rulers. Ajit Singh despite openly challenging the imperial authority found it prudent to avoid war against them. Hussain Ali Khan was determined to compel Ajit Singh for an abject surrender. To create a rift among the Rathore nobles, he suggested to the emperor that Jodhpur might be granted to Indra Singh of Nagaur. And Indra Singh should then be entrusted with the task of capturing Ajit Singh. The emperor was opposed to follow a policy of blatant aggression. He secretly wrote to Ajit Singh that he should manage to kill Hussain Ali Khan. He patched up with Husain Ali and avoided the war. A treaty was concluded between him and Husain Ali. According to which he submitted to Husain Ali and in proof of his loyalty agreed to marry his daughter to Farrukh Siyar. He also agreed to follow the earlier order of the emperor to go to Sorath which he had not followed.

Jai Singh intervened and prevailed upon Ajit Singh to make peace with the Mughals. Ajit Singh accepted the suggestion. He sent his Vakil, Nand Ram, to Hussain Ali Khan for negotiations. Nand Ram succeeded in his mission and an agreement was concluded on March 19, 1714. Ajit Singh agreed to send his son to the court, to attend the court in person when summoned, to give his daughter, Indra Kunwar, in marriage to the emperor and to pay a peshkash.²³ Jai Singh reiterated his faith in an unstinted loyalty to the Imperial authority as followed by his ancestors. This was a clear

²³ Tikkiwal, *Jaipur*, p.96

departure from the earlier stand. Jai Singh was in compliance with the imperial authority and requested all the leading chiefs in Rajasthan to join them in the fight against struggle the Saiyyids.

The relation between the two Rajput rajas came a full circle when Jai Singh joined the Mughal army sent against Ajit Singh.²⁴ They had differed on the question of Sambhar and Didwana. It has been mentioned above that Maharaja Jai Singh made it clear to Abdullah Khan that the delay in handing over the charge of these Parganas was due to Ajit Singh who held control over them. It is apparent that Maharaja Jai Singh was no longer interested in opposing the Mughals jointly with Ajit Singh if the emperor agreed to appoint him the subadar of Gujarat or Malwa. Since the succession of Farrukh Siyar, Jai Singh remained neutral and did not associate himself with the activities of Ajit Singh. Both of them wanted to extend their influence over Rajputana. Ajit Singh felt that he had been deprived of Sambhar and Didwana due to Jai Singh, who put all the responsibility of disobeying the imperial orders on him in order to gain goodwill at the Mughal Court. He sided with the Saiyid brothers and with their support got the subadari of Gujarat and also held the Parganas of Sojat, Jaitaran, Phalodi, Siwana, Merta and Gajsinghpur along with Jodhpur.²⁵ Later he was also granted Nagaur. The acceptance of the right of Ajit Singh over Nagaur was a significant factor in the consolidation of the Rathore power. Ajit Singh's control now extended over the areas which were once dominated by the Rathore clan.

The court politics was so much in favour of Ajit Singh that he got the most advantageous position after the death of Farrukhsiyar. He was granted the subadari of both Ajmer and Gujarat. From a contemporary account, it appears that the award of

²⁴ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.398

²⁵ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.398

the *mansabs* granted to Ajit Singh, his sons and other Rathore sardars, was a high watermark in the history of Marwar as well as of other Rajput states. Apart from the *jagirs* in Marwar, Ajit Singh was granted *jagirs* outside Marwar also. The most significant feature was the increase in the number of Marwar sardars at the Mughal court. which rose from seven, holding the imperial *mansabs* in the reign of Jaswant Singh, to fortyfour. He had been appointed subadar of Gujarat and the deteriorating political and administrative conditions required his presence there, he didn't obey the imperial command.

Ajit Singh soon got a chance to renew the friendship with Jai Singh when the latter was under the threat of imperial attack. Saiyid Abdullah Khan marched towards Ajmer along with emperor Rafu-ud-Daulah and Ajit Singh with the intention of dislodging Jai Singh from gaddi of Amber.²⁶ Ajit Singh interceded on behalf of Jai Singh and that it was due to his persuasion that Abdullah Khan agreed to pardon Jai Singh. The Saiyids also showed their generosity and granted Jai Singh a large sum of money and the faujdari of Sorath. Ajit Singh tried to strengthen the bonds of goodwill between Jai Singh and the Saiyids.²⁷ Later, Maharaja Jai Singh accompanied by Ajit Singh reached Jodhpur in 1719. While staying there, Jai Singh was married to the daughter of Ajit Singh, the celebration being performed in 1720.²⁸

A matrimonial alliance between the two of them after having such a troubled relationship presents an interesting picture. There was no consistency and stability in their relationship. The element of trust was always missing and sides were changed very comfortably. Ajit Singh still avoided going to Gujarat despite pressing letters

²⁶ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.400

²⁷ Barahath, *Ajit Vilas*

²⁸ Barahath, *Ajit Vilas*

from Saiyid Abdullah Khan. Jai Singh on his part was also clear about the intention of Ajit Singh and continued intriguing with the opponents of the Saiyids even after the marriage ceremony. In spite of cordiality established between the two Rajas, Jai Singh secured the clandestine support of emperor Mohammad Shah. Maharaja Jai Singh was not satisfied with the position granted to him by the Saiyids. Although he held the *mansab* which has been his long demand, and the faujdari of Sorath, he could not forego the subadari of Malwa, which he had held during Farrukh Siyar reign.

Jai Singh soon started intriguing against Ajit Singh. A study of the letters written by Jai Singh to the Maharana, the rulers of Bikaner, Kota and Indra Singh, reveals that he was trying to rally these Rajput Rajas in favour of Mohammad Shah and against Saiyid Abdullah Khan.²⁹ However, none of them responded to the suggestion of Jai Singh. The influence of Ajit Singh was at its peak and none of the Rajput rulers wanted to offend him. With the murder of Husain Ali Khan and imprisonment of Abdullah Khan the scenario changed completely. This had a direct impact on Ajit Singh. Soon after the defeat of Abdullah Khan, he was removed from the subadari of Gujarat and Ajmer.³⁰ In retaliation, he started plundering the imperial territory and sent out the price Abhay Singh and Bhandari Raghunath towards Sambhar. They could establish their control over areas like Narnol, *Tijara* and Shahjahanpur. Ajit Singh also tried to gain control over Bikaner, but he failed in his efforts. However, he conquered the areas like Naguar, Ajmer, Toda, Sambhar etc.

Challenge to the Imperial Authority

These activities of Ajit Singh were a direct challenge to the imperial authority. As soon as the imperial authority decided to force Ajit Singh to evacuate Ajmer and the

²⁹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.237

³⁰ Chandra, *Parties*, p.93

other imperial territories he had to change his attitude and withdrew to from Ajmer. He also sent an arzadast to the emperor seeking pardon for his faults and pleading for the retention of Ajmer. This shows that he was not willing to indulge with the imperial authority directly. The departure of Ajit Singh from Ajmer after leaving behind his troops, indicated clearly that he was confident of retaining the subadari of that province.³¹ But the appointment of Nahar Khan as diwan of Ajmer and faujdar of Sambhar in renewed the hostility of Ajit Singh who did not allow him to secure control over Ajmer and got him murdered when he entered the territory of Ajmer. The Jats under Churaman's son Mohakam Singh again rebelled against the Mughal government.

Jai Singh was given the responsibility to tackle the Jat rebellion and was given the area belonging to Churaman's sons as his Tankhah *jagir*. Hence Jai Singh made Badan Singh a Zamindar on behalf of the emperor. The position of Badan Singh and other vassals of Raja Jai Singh was quite different. Badan Singh was not a vassal in the territory of Raja Jaipur but he was granted a Zamindari in Khalsa territory of the Mughal Empire. Raja Jai Singh was only an intermediary between the emperor and Badan Singh. It was only in this form that Badan Singh became the subordinate of Sawai Jai Singh.³²

Ajit Singh on the other hand extended his support to Churaman Jat of Bharatpur by dispatching a contingent against Jai Singh. After the defeat of Churaman Jat he renewed his contact with Mohkam Singh Jat to whom he had given shelter.³³ These acts of Ajit Singh not only enraged the emperor but also showed his enmity against Jai Singh. Ajit Singh was not in favour of the expansion of Jai Singh's influence over

³¹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.93

³² Pande, *Relations*, pp.185-189.

³³ Singh and Ranawat, *Jodhpur*, p.402

Jat territory but he could do nothing to help Mohkam Singh Jat to regain his territory. emperor Mohammad Shah then decided to go all out against Ajit Singh. appointed Sharf-ud-Daulah as the commander of a huge army to be sent against him. Haider Quli Khan, Jai Singh, Girdhar Bahadur, etc., were to help the imperial army. Ajit Singh still decided against a direct conflict with the imperial army and Singh left a Rathore contingent to face the imperial army.

It was now the turn of Ajit Singh to request Jai Singh to intercede on his behalf to the imperial authority. The latter obliged and Prince Abhay Singh appeared before Haider Quli Khan with the arzadast of Ajit Singh, according to which the former was to have an audience with the emperor for his pardon. An agreement was concluded in according to which the Maharaja agreed to surrender the territories which he had occupied by force. Nagaur was granted to Indra Singh. Although Ajit Singh was restored to the *mansab* of 7000/7000, he had to send Abhay Singh to court in order to pacify the emperor.³⁴ He was deprived of the territory he had held outside Marwar. The conditions to which Ajit Singh had to agree were humiliating for him and isolated him in the Mughal politics. He was deprived of the territory he had held outside Marwar. The conditions to which Ajit Singh had to agree were humiliating for him and isolated him in the Mughal politics. The emperor in alliance with Jai Singh looked for an opportunity to have Ajit Singh killed. The emperor began to develop close relations with prince Abhay Singh through Jai Singh. He also won over Bhandari Raghunath. All of them combined together and Bakht Singh, the younger son killed his father Ajit Singh.

³⁴ Barahath, *Ajit Vilas*

Marathas in Rajasthan

Abhay Singh had to face stiff challenge from Anand Singh and Rai Singh. Both of them started plundering the the areas like Sirohi, Sojat and Jaitaran. Rai Singh marched towards Siwana where he was feared to have plundered the areas of Jodhpur. The situation became more complicated when it was reported that Anand Singh had entered into matrimonial relations with the Marathas in order to secure their help for the occupation of Jodhpur.³⁵ Rai Singh and Anand Singh tried to negotiate a deal with the Marathas. This alarmed the rulers of Mewar and Amber. Maharana Sangrarn Singh and Jai Singh tried to settle their disputes with the Rathore princes. To placate them Jai Singh made a request to Abbay Singh to assign Idar in *jagir* to them and grant *pattas* to their followers. Maharaja Jai Singh wanted to solve the problems of the Rathore princes which had taken a different shape as they had invited the Marathas to get possession over Marwar.

The personal interest of the Rajput rulers again became the most important factor as Jai Singh himself did not stand by his proposal. He had his own interest in keeping the Marathas out of Rajasthan. It is said that an attempt was made by Jai Singh along with the Rana to conclude an agreement with Shahu, but it failed due to their lack of confidence in the Marathas.³⁶ Jai Singh wrote letters to Sangram Singh, Abhay Singh and Rawal Durjansal in which he asked them to send their armies to Udaipur to form a united front against the Marathas.³⁷ These efforts were obviously made after the failure to arrive at an agreement with the Marathas in but as Jai Singh failed to get any

³⁵ Chandra, *Parties*, p.95

³⁶ Chandra, *Parties*, p.95

³⁷ Letters written by Jai Singh quoted in Sharma, *Rajput*, p.265

concrete response from Abhay Singh and Maharao Durjansal, the raising of any united army against the Marathas was not possible.

Even in the face of Maratha threat there was no unity among the Rajput rulers. The Maharana for some time past had been desirous of obtaining the Pargana of Idar from Jodhpur. He was interested in securing Idar not only because it formed part of his hereditary *jagir*, but also due to its strategic importance in checking the Marathas into Mewar. In fact Maharaja Jai Singh had accepted the fact that the assignment of Idar to the Maharana would bar the entry of the Marathas. Therefore, he advised Abhay Singh, to make over the Pargana of Idar to the Maharana.³⁸ Abhay Singh accepted this advice and gave Idar to the Maharana on condition that he would take the responsibility of killing Rai Singh and Anand Singh. Jai Singh also favoured this deal. Thus Abhay Singh was more interested in dealing with his internal opponents than challenging the Marathas. Both these princes escaped to Sirohi and from there started making raid in the villages in the territory of the Maharana. Jai Singh also requested Jaisalmer ruler not to give protection to Rai Singh and Anand Singh.

In the absence of any concrete help from the Marathas they agreed to submit to the Rana. Maharana Sangram Singh did not put them to death, disregarding the agreement which he had made with Abhay Singh while receiving Idar, and kept them with him. Maharaja Jai Singh himself was not in favour of taking their lives. He still held that they should be given suitable *jagirs* to feed themselves. Perhaps both Sangram Singh and Jai Singh did not want to invite trouble from the side of the Marathas who had already shown their inclination towards these princes. Abhay Singh was also worried about the increasing interest of the Marathas in Marwar. Bajirao had granted the

³⁸ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

saranjami of Jodhpur to Málhar Rao Holkar. In the same year the Maratha sardars, Kanthaji and Pilaji had entered the territory of Sojat. Abhay Singh had no other alternative but to buy peace from his brothers.³⁹ It was agreed that those villages of Pargana Idar which were on Mewar side were to remain with the Maharana, and Kasha Idar and the other remaining villages would be given to them.

Though the rulers of Mewar, Amber, Kota and Jaisalmer extended their cooperation to Abhay Singh the mutual suspicion among them didn't end. The appearance of the Marathas on the territory of Mewar and Marwar paved the way for future inroads and mutual suspicion. The bitterness among the Rajput Rajas kept growing due to many political developments. During this period Jai Singh had unreservedly supported Maharaja Abhay Singh in keeping law and order in Marwar and in resolving the problems caused by the revolt of Rai Singh and Anand Singh. Although the cooperation shown by Maharaja Jai Singh indicates that both the rulers had trust in each other, a study of the correspondence which took place between Abhay Singh and Jai Singh, reveals that even during this period there were many factors which strained their relations.

Jai Singh was already facing trouble in his territory caused by the Shekhawat and the Khangarot sardars. Shekhawat sardar Lal Singh, etc., had been ousted from Amber territory by Jai Singh. They were given shelter in Merta from where they were making raids on the territory of Amber. Despite repeated reminders by Jai Singh, Abhay Singh didn't take action against these Shekhawat sardars.⁴⁰ The latter was using these sardars against the Ladkhanis of Nagaur who were creating trouble in his territory. The Shekhawat sardars were granted *pattas* where the Ladkhanis were engaged in

³⁹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.265

⁴⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.266

destructive activities.⁴¹ In 1728 an agreement was concluded between Abhay Singh and Jai Singh by which the former promised not to give shelter to any Kachhawah or Rathore sardar who might revolt against the Jaipur.

The agreements were never sacrosanct for the Rajput rulers. This was violated by Jai Singh himself who gave shelter to Rathore Kishor Singh, the brother of Abhay Singh who had started plundering the territories of the Parganas of Pokaran and Phalodi. Thus Abhay Singh was being paid in his own coin. The reason for his rebellious activities was the denial of a suitable *jagir* to him. Apparently when Rai Singh and Anand Singh were given the villages of Pargana Idar, Abhay Singh did not consider the claims of Kishor Singh. Abhay Singh also encouraged the Kangarots to create trouble in the territory of Amber. Abhay Singh had earlier protested against the appointment of Muzaffar Khan as the faujdar of Ajmer and suggested that the combined armies of Mewar, Marwar and should form a united front to check the imperial control over these Parganas.

Jai Singh again took the same position that he had taken during the time of Ajit Singh and was not ready to involve himself in a scheme which might annoy the emperor. In fact he pleaded before emperor Muhammad Shah for the grant of the subadari of Malwa which he secured.⁴² Jai Singh could not retain the subadari of Malwa for long. He returned to Jaipur and got entangled in the affairs of Bundi. Budh Singh was removed and the gaddi was given to Dalel Singh, son of Salim Singh Hada of Narwar. This caused great concern among the Rajput Rajas. Jai Singh's action was not liked by the Maharana and Maharao Durjansal of Kota. Maharana Sangram Singh showed sympathy towards Budh Singh because he was unhappy with Jai Singh on the

⁴¹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.266

⁴² Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, p.103

question of the succession of Madho Singh, the son of Jai Singh born from the Mewar princess. Budh Singh also received the favour of Maharaja Abhay Singh, who took his side not because the injustice done to the latter was pricking his conscience, but because opposition to Jai Singh enhanced his own prestige. Although no military help to Budh Singh was given by the Rana or Abhay Singh at this time, it became clear that both wanted to check the power of Jai Singh.

The Rajput rulers appointed their deputies in their subadari areas and concentrated more and more in their own areas. The intention was to extend their area of influence. Abhay Singh was trying to get Ajmer, Sambhar and Didwana, but he failed in his objective. In 1730 he was appointed the subadar of Gujarat in place of Sarbuland Khan. It may be noted that in spite of repeated reminders by Raja Jai Singh, Abhay Singh had not proceeded to Gujarat to assist Sarbuland Khan. Now that he had been given the charge of that suba and had no pressing internal problems left in Marwar, he was in a position to take up the task assigned to him by the Mughal emperor. The appointment of Abhay Singh as the subadar of Gujarat had far-reaching consequences for the politics of Marwar as well as of Rajputana. The departure of Maharaja Abhay Singh from Gujarat after leaving all administrative responsibilities in the hands of his deputy, was significant for the external and internal politics of Marwar for it left the Maratha sardars free to reestablish their control in Gujarat.⁴³

After his arrival, Abhay Singh got engaged in extending his influence in Rajputana. Bakht Singh diverted his attention towards Bikaner by invading it. It is said that in the month of August 1733, a dispute arose between Bakht Singh and Sujan Singh, ruler of Bikaner, over a boundary affair. But the motive of Bakht Singh was primarily

⁴³ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.267

political. He was not satisfied with Nagaur and had complained that the income from Nagaur was not sufficient for him to render services to the emperor. The contents of the letter written by Bakht Singh to Bhandari Amar Singh reveal that after being dislodged from the *jagir* of Patan, Bakht Singh was not holding any *jagir* in addition to Nagaur. Abhay Singh also helped him with an army contingent against Bikaner. The ruler of Bikaner was forced to make an offer of peace. He accepted the allegiance of the ruler of Jodhpur and agreed to pay rupees twelve lacs as indemnity.

Due to the threat posed by the Marathas the Jodhpur army had to withdraw. The Marathas posed a serious threat to the existence of the Rajput Rajas. The Maratha activities in Rajputana became more serious because of the entry of Malhar Rao into Bundi.⁴⁴ The apparent reason for their arrival in the territory of Bundi was to place Rao Budh Singh on the Bundi. The Maratha sardars succeeded in their objective and proclaimed Budh Singh as the ruler of Bundi. Although Budh Singh could not maintain his possession for long, as the military intervention of Maharaja Jai Singh restored Daler Singh on the gaddi of Bundi. He also sought Abhay Singh's help to drive out the Marathas from Rajputana.⁴⁵ Abhay Singh wanted to take advantage of the situation created due to Maratha incursions on Rajputana, to put forward his claim for the grant of the subadari of Ajmer.

In order to check the threat from the Marathas the Rajput rulers assembled at Hurda. Besides Abhay Singh and Bakht Singh, the rulers of Kota, Bikaner, Kishangarh and Karauli were also present. They came to an agreement according to which they pledged to; They shall remain united in all circumstances, good or bad, with a pledge to abide by the terms, No one shall help the defector of another, After the rains, the

⁴⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.268

⁴⁵ Letter from Abhay Singh to Bhandari Amar Singh as quoted Sharma, *Rajput*, p.272

situation shall be discussed and the chiefs of all the parties shall assemble at Rampura, and if for any reason a chief cannot come, he shall send his heir or some other person or a sardar, Should such an heir commit any mistake out of inexperience, the Maharana alone shall be competent to correct it.⁴⁶ In every campaign all shall unite to conduct it. A study of the above terms makes it clear that these rulers had realized the danger posed by the Marathas' appearance in Rajputana. One of the important development was the recognition of the superiority of the Maharana above all the rulers of Rajputana.

The unity among the Rajput Rajas was superficial. The participation of Abhay Singh was made possible only after his disappointment from the Mughal court. But he was still in touch with the court and made it clear that his participation was aimed at opposing the Marathas rather than at forming any united front against the Mughals.⁴⁷ Abhay Singh was trying to secure the subadari of Ajmer along with that of Gujarat and had shown his readiness to proceed to Ahmedabad if it was so desired by Nawab Khan-i-Dauran. His departure to Gujarat remained postponed due to the Maratha incursion on the Amber territory. It seems that Abhay Singh was waiting for a favourable reply from the Mughal wazir when he accepted the request of Jai Singh to help him against the Marathas.⁴⁸

The Marathas could isolate the Rajput rulers from one another. While the Marathas were plundering the territory of Jaipur, Abhay Singh did not render any military help to Jai Singh. Abhay Singh, Jai Singh, Durjansal and other Rajput rulers joined Khan-i-Dauran to oust the Marathas from Rajputana. The combined army under the command of Khan-i-Dauran reached Rampura in 1735 where Holkar and Sindhia were expected

⁴⁶ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.275

⁴⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.276

⁴⁸ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.276

to be ready for the counter attack. The Maratha commanders, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Sindhia harassed the contingent of Abhay Singh, Jai Singh, Durjansal and Khán-i-Dàuran after isolating them from each other. Sambhar was sacked by them in 1735, yielding a rich booty. Later, after the negotiations between Khan-i-Dauran and the Marathas in 1735, Abhay Singh proceeded to Delhi along with Khan-i-Dauran. Abhay Singh's presence at the court at that time when Marwar was still facing the danger of the Maratha encroachment was motivated by selfish considerations.

The differences between the two rulers became a regular feature. When Abhay Singh could not get the subadari of Ajmer he got the grant of Ranthambhor to Jai Singh also withdrawn. Abhay Singh was trying to secure the subadari of Ajmer in place of Gujarat. In fact the demand of the subadari of Ajmer was put forward by Abhay Singh at the time when Khan-i-Dauran succeeded in getting the order of the grant of Ranthambhor in favour of Jai Singh. Abhay Singh's policy towards the Marathas also created differences with Jai Singh. At the court Abhay Singh joined wazir Qamar-ud-Din Khan who was in favour of active action against the Marathas. Thus Abhay Singh associated himself in the court with the party which openly opposed the policy of Jai Singh. This rivalry became apparent when on the advice of Jai Singh, Malhar Rao, Ranoji, etc., entered Marwar and conducted a fierce campaign which lasted for two months, culminating in the surrender of the Rathores before the Maratha commanders at Merta in 1736.⁴⁹

The essence of Hurda conference was lost very soon. Although the Maratha sardars left the territory of Marwar after securing a handsome indemnity, it became quite clear that the treaty was of no avail and no combined Rajput action against the

⁴⁹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.272

Marathas was to be expected in future. With a view to exploiting the situation, both Abhay Singh and Jai Singh were trying to get more and more concessions from the emperor and, therefore, the rivalry between the two became inevitable. Abhay Singh was associated with the pro-war party at the Mughal court yet he continued his efforts to improve his position in Rajputana. Due to mismanagement and irregularities, he was removed from the subadari of Gujarat. His demand of the subadari of Ajmer was not entertained, but he succeeded in securing the faujdari of Sambhar in the same year. The grant of the faujdari of Sambhar was significant, as we find that apart from Ajmer, Abhay Singh was also trying for Sambhar. Earlier Ajit Singh had tried to secure the grant of Sambhar, but in spite of his best efforts, he failed to get it. Maharaja Abhay Singh, after his arrival at Jodhpur concerned himself with extending his influence over the neighbouring territories. Although he had been deprived of Ajmer, he wanted to secure its possession by force.

The Mughal emperor was not in a position to take any military action against Abhay Singh due to his engagement with the Marathas and frictions in the court. Keeping in view the terms of the Hurda conference Abhay Singh asked Maharao Durjansal and Maharana Jagat Singh to send their contingents for an attack on Ajmer. But both declined as they were not ready to associate themselves in a move against the Mughal authority. Abhay Singh could not achieve his desire and had to postpone his plan for the time being because of internal troubles caused by his brother Bakht Singh.

Within the state also the internal feud started taking place. The feud between Bakht Singh and Abhay Singh became imminent. The former had been granted Nagaur almost as an independent *jagir* but he was not satisfied with it and wanted to secure more *jagirs* from the Mughal emperor. He was also not happy with the interference of

Abhay Singh in the affairs of Nagaur. Abhay Singh had either appointed his own nominees or the appointments were made with his consent in Nagaur. During Abhay Singh's absence from Marwar, Bakht Singh held charge of administrative and military affairs. Availing himself of this opportunity, he strengthened his power and established direct relations with the Mughal emperor. Bakht Singh's intentions became clear when he turned down the advice of Maharaja Abhay Singh to remove all the Bhandaris from the state administration, He also dismissed diwan Pancholi Lalji who was loyal to Abhay Singh. This attitude of Bakht Singh annoyed Abhay Singh, who later on appointed Lalji as diwan of Jodhpur. The friction between the two became quite obvious when Abhay Singh sent his army against Bikaner. The aim was to establish his superiority over the ruler of Bikaner and to recapture the thanas which had been seized by Zorawar Singh. Abhay Singh could not register any success against Zorawar Singh as he had to withdraw his array in order to march against Merta which was invaded by Bakht Singh.

The role of nobility became even more dominant. They prevailed upon their rulers to avoid war. After the arrival of the Jodhpur army at Merta, the nobles of both the sides realized the futility of the fight. Therefore, Khichi Harnath on behalf of Abhay Singh, and Chauhan Mohkan Singh on behalf of Bakht Singh held a meeting.⁵⁰

Reconciliation was thus brought about between the two brothers, but both remained suspicious of each other.

The suspicion against one another among the Rajput rulers was increasing fast. Abhay Singh again invaded Bikaner and laid siege to the Bikaner fort and forced Zorawar Singh to buy peace. But Zorawar Singh was playing a trick. Keeping Abhay Singh

⁵⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.279

busy with peace efforts, he solicited help from Bakht Singh. Bakht Singh responded favourably, and also tried to bring Jai Singh to his side.⁵¹ Jai Singh was already on bitter terms with Abhay Singh and soon realized the danger from Abhay Singh if he succeeded in securing control over Bikaner from where he could attack Jaipur. It is said that to prove his sincerity in his promise to the ruler of Bikaner, Bakht Singh invaded Merta. At the same time Jai Singh also reached there.

Jai Singh got Abhay Singh completely isolated. His march against Jodhpur was to follow the order of the Mughal emperor. He got a farman issued by the emperor for the assignment of Merta to Bakht Singh. Moreover, Maharaja Jai Singh proclaimed Ratan Singh, the brother of Abhay Singh, the ruler of Jodhpur. Another brother of Abhay Singh, Raj Kishor, sieged Parbatsar. Besides these two brothers of Abhay Singh, Jai Singh was also accompanied by Roop Singh Rathore, ruler of Roopnagar (Kisangarh), Surajmal Jat, Gopal Singh of Karauli, and an army contingent of Zorawar Singh of Bikaner. The assignment of Merta to Bakht Singh was to check the activities of Abhay Singh in time. As soon as Abhay Singh got the news of Jai Singh's arrival he raised the siege of Bikaner and returned to Jodhpur. Later he proceeded to Merta where both the armies took their positions. But Abhay Singh realizing the inferiority of his strength and the consequences of his defeat, initiated negotiations with Jai Singh. He released Bhandari Raghunath from prison and sent him to conclude terms. Bakht Singh might have anticipated the danger caused due to the recognition of Ratan Singh as the ruler of Jodhpur.⁵² This would have limited his control only to the, Parganas of Nugaur and Merta. Such an arrangement would have affirmed the division of Jodhpur into various territorial units. This would have

⁵¹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.280

⁵² Sharma, *Rajput*, p.281

ultimately gone in favour of Jai Singh whose supremacy over Marwa would then become inevitable.

In response to the peace offer of Abhay Singh, Jai Singh demanded a huge amount as indemnity. But, significantly, the claim of indemnity made by Jai Singh ignored Bakht Singh who was then fighting against his brothers along with Jai Singh. Under these circumstances Bakht Singh decided to support Abhay Singh and informed him about his decision. But Abhay Singh who had no faith in the sincerity of his brother paid no heed to his proposal, and concluded peace with Jai Singh. According to the conditions, Abhay Singh agreed to pay rupees twenty lacs as indemnity to Jai Singh.⁵³ The terms conceded by Abhay Singh were quite adverse. Therefore, soon after the agreement with Jai Singh, Maharaja Abhay Singh and Bakht Singh decided to recover their prestige by defeating Jai Singh. Bakht Singh tried to get the support of Mabarao Durjansal of Kota in his fight against Jai Singh but Bakht Singh was defeated by Jai Singh.

The diminishing power of the Mughal authority prompted Jai Singh to seek help from the Marathas. He extended an invitation to Baji Rao I in 1741, with a view to entering into an agreement of helping each other against common danger. But his plan did not materialize. Jai Singh, along with Zorawar Singh of Bikaner, marched against the combined army of Bakht Singh and Abhay Singh. At Gangwara a severe battle was fought in May 1741.⁵⁴ At the intervention of Maharana Jagat Singh, both sides concluded peace in January 1742. They agreed not to interfere in internal affairs of one another. Thus the conflict with Bikaner moved on to Jaipur and for three years the armies of Jodhpur and Jaipur plundered each others territories thereby sowing the

⁵³ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.281

⁵⁴ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.282

seeds of instability in Rajputana. The Maharana remained neutral, but later, on the issue of the succession to the gaddi of Jaipur, he too entered the fray.⁵⁵

After the death of Jai Singh, Abhay Singh got an opportunity to establish his superiority over the Rajput rulers. The political situation of the Kachhawah state was deteriorating due to a civil war on the issue of succession. The problem of succession was raised on the basis of the agreement of 1709, according to which the son of the Udaipuri Rani was to be installed on the gaddi after Jai Singh's death. Although Ishwari Singh had been recognised as the legitimate successor of Jai Singh, the claim of his younger brother, Madho Singh, who was the son of the Udaipuri Rani was supported by Rana Jagat Singh. The involvement of the Rana complicated the situation. He invited Maharao Durjansal of Kota for help. Maharao Durjansal who felt offended due to the intervention of Sawai Jai Singh in the affairs of Bundi, responded favourably to the request of the Rana. It was also decided that the gaddi of Bundi should be conferred on Ummed Singh, son of Budh Singh, who had been dislodged by Jai Singh. But the battle did not take place and the contending parties concluded peace.

It seems that the primary motive of the Rana was to settle the question of Madho Singh's succession and as soon as he had reached an agreement with Ishwari Singh, he stopped bothering about the Bundi affair. Maharao Durjansal who had helped the Rana on the condition that Bundi would be granted to Ummed Singh was thus disappointed. It may be noted that in spite of the enmity with the ruler of Jaipur, Abhay Singh did not render any help to the Rana during his campaign against Ishwari Singh. The succession of Ishwari Singh was favourable to Abhay Singh as the former

⁵⁵ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.282

could never be supported by the Maharana. Abhay Singh took advantage of the civil war in Jaipur. While Ishwari Singh was facing the Mewar army, Abhay Singh marched upon Ajmer and occupied it. After leaving the Rana, Durjansal joined Abhay Singh. This suggests that the ruler of Kota was ready to join any camp which opposed Ishwari Singh and promised to correct the wrong done by Jai Singh regarding the gaddi of Bundi. On hearing about the seizure of Ajmer by Abhay Singh, Ishwari Singh marched towards Ajmer to settle the score with Abhay Singh. The fight did not take place and an agreement was reached between the two according to which Abhay Singh's control over Ajmer was recognised by Ishwari Singh. Abhay Singh went a step further and established his control over Kisangarh.

In the meantime Hada Durjansal with the help of Fakhruddaulah succeeded in his attempt to dislodge Dalel Singh and install in his place Ummed Singh, son of Rao Budh Singh on the gaddi of Bundi. But Ummed Singh could not maintain his position for long, as Dalel Singh recovered his possessions with the assistance of Ishwari Singh. Although on the question of Bundi, Abhay Singh did not come into direct conflict with Ishwari Singh, the restoration of Dalel Singh was against Abhay Singh's wishes. Thus the old rivalry between the two houses continued. Internally, Abhay Singh's peace settlement with Ishwari Singh was opposed by his brother Bakht Singh.

The Rana was not satisfied with the agreement and he wanted to dislodge Ishwari Singh from the gaddi of Jaipur. Therefore, when Ishwari Singh was at the Mughal court, the Rana again invited Holkar and promised him to pay rupees one crore if he seated Madho Singh on the gaddi of Jaipur.⁵⁶ Accordingly, Maharana Jagat Singh along with the Maratha army marched against Jaipur. But the whole plan was disrupted as Ishwari Singh reached Amber before the arrival of the joint forces and

⁵⁶ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.282

offered money to the Maratha sardars who were won over to his side. The rulers of Udaipur, Jodhpur and Kota continued fighting against Ishwari Singh and each of them tried to win over the support of the Marathas. It is significant to note that in no case did the rulers of Jodhpur and Udaipur unite against Jaipur, because Abhay Singh did not support the cause of Madho Singh and the Rana was not pleased with Abhay Singh's policy of expansion.

In the absence of Jai Singh, Abhay Singh tried to expand his territory and eyed Bikaner. After the death of Zorawar Singh a dispute arose between Maharaja Gaj Singh and his elder brother, Amar Singh, on the issue of succession, which provided an opportunity to Abhay Singh to intervene. He sent an army against Bikaner in support of Amar Singh. It is said that Amar Singh went to Abhay Singh and solicited his help. Other Bikaner sardars who were staying at Jodhpur, supported the cause of Amar Singh. Maharaja Abhay Singh availed himself of this opportunity and sent his army to help the dissatisfied prince. But Jodhpur army returned to its territory without achieving anything.

Bakht Singh did not participate against Bikaner and on the invitation of the Mughal emperor. He joined the Mughals against Ahmad Shah Durrani. In fact, Maharaja Abhay Singh showed his inability to join the Mughal army against Ahmad Shah Durrani and also asked Bakht Singh not to attend the court.⁵⁷ The attitude of Abhay Singh only indicated the general trend of disobedience among the *mansabdars* who, taking advantage of the disintegration of the central power, started defying it.

After his accession emperor Ahmad Shah adopted an indifferent attitude towards Abhay Singh which caused serious complications in the politics of Marwar. He

⁵⁷ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.283

conferred upon Bakht Singh the subadari of Gujarat and Ajmer. The intention of the emperor behind the assignment of these subas is apparent as its ultimate result was the conflict between Abhay Singh and Bakht Singh. Abhay Singh already held control over Sambhar, Didwana and Ajmer. Bakht Singh was given Ajmer which meant control over Sambhar, Didwana and Narnol also. The control over Sambhar and Didwana by Bakht Singh could never be accepted by Abhay Singh as the latter himself was interested in maintaining his control over there. Thus the assignment of the subadari of Gujarat and Ajmer was an open challenge to the rights of Abhay Singh. To secure control over these areas which fell under the control of Abhay Singh, a conflict between the two became inevitable. Abhay Singh sought the help of Malharrao Holkar through Durjansal with whom the Maratha sardar was staying. Bakht Singh got help from the ruler of Bikaner. The fight did not take place, as due to the revival of the conflict between Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh, Holkars march against Amber became necessary. However, Malharrao Holkar brought about a reconciliation between the two brothers.⁵⁸

Holkar's march against Ishwari Singh marked a change in Abhay Singh's policy towards Jaipur. Maharaja Abhay Singh had always opposed the intervention of Jai Singh in the affairs of Bundi. However, after Jai Singh's death, Abhay Singh did not involve himself in the succession dispute at Jaipur. Abhay Singh joined the Maratha and the Mewar armies. The combined armies of the Rana, Abhay Singh and the Marathas succeeded in defeating Ishwari Singh at Bagru. Ishwari Singh agreed to assign Bundi to Ummed Singh and four additional Parganas of Tonk to Madho Singh.⁵⁹ Thus the Maratha interference in Rajputana politics became a dominant

⁵⁸ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

⁵⁹ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

factor in deciding the disputes of the Rajput rulers. The Maratha commanders were paid considerable money by the parties which engaged them in their conflicts.

The nobility of the Rajput states gained so much of strength that they could bargain the ruler. The nobles of Abhay Singh clearly reminded him that their support to his son Ram Singh would depend upon his willingness to protect their interests and maintain their *thikanas*.

The entry of the Marathas in the Rajputana was a significant phenomenon. The Rajput rulers in their inability to settle their problems, invited the Marathas to their areas. Till the time the Mughal authority was strong there was no such necessity. In the wake of diminishing Mughal power the Rajput rulers turned towards the Marathas. The Marathas used this opportunity to augment their resources and their area of influence. When Jai Singh and Ajit Singh decided to regain their watan lands by force and they thought of bringing all other powers to their side. Jai Singh also wrote letters to Maratha ruler Shahu and Bundela leader Chatrashal in their campaign against the Mughals.⁶⁰

The possibility of any alliance involving non Rajput powers was curtailed due to the mistrust among the Rajput rulers. The Mughal authority also tried to effect a divide among the Rajput rulers. In order to avert the Rajput-Sikh coalition, Nizam Mulk tried to win over Jai Singh with the grant of a *mansab* of 3500/3000 and the Parganas of Amber, Phagi and Dausa and a *Jagir* worth thirty five lakhs. Jai Singh chose to negotiate with the imperial authority and the idea of any such alliance was put down. During his first viceroyalty of Malwa he settled the dispute between his protege Budh

⁶⁰ Bhatnagar, *Sawai Jai Singh*, p.35

Singh and his cousin Bhim Singh at Bundi. He had to face the Marathas and the Afghans in this endeavour.

After the death of Ajit Singh, Abhay Singh had to face stiff challenge from Anand Singh and Rai Singh. Both of them started plundering the areas like Sirohi, Sojat and Jaitaran. The situation became more complicated when it was reported that Anand Singh had entered into matrimonial relations with the Marathas in order to secure their help for the occupation of Jodhpur.⁶¹ This alarmed the rulers of Mewar and Amber. Maharana Sangram Singh and Jai Singh tried to settle their disputes with the Rathore princes. To placate them Jai Singh made a request to Abhay Singh to assign Idar in *jagir* to them and grant *pattas* to their followers. Maharaja Jai Singh wanted to solve the problems of the Rathore princes which had taken a different shape as they had invited the Marathas to get possession over Marwar.

Jai Singh feared that the entry of the Marathas in their areas would be detrimental to them. He along with the Rana decided to conclude an agreement with Shahu, but it failed due to their lack of confidence in the Marathas.⁶² Jai Singh also wrote letters to Sangram Singh, Abhay Singh and Rawal Durjansal in which he asked them to form a united front against the Marathas.⁶³ Even in the face of Maratha threat there was no unity among the Rajput rulers. Jai Singh had accepted the assignment of Idar to the Maharana hoping that it would bar the entry of the Marathas. Abhay Singh accepted this advice and gave Idar to the Maharana on condition that he would take the

⁶¹ Chandra, *Parties*, p.95

⁶² Chandra, *Parties*, p.95

⁶³ Letters written by Jai Singh quoted in Sharma, *Rajput*, p.265

responsibility of killing Rai Singh and Anand Singh.⁶⁴ Thus Abhay Singh was more interested in dealing with his internal opponents than challenging the Marathas.

The threat from the side of the Marathas was so real that Maharana Sangram Singh did not put Anand Singh and Rai Singh to death, when they had surrendered to him. This was in disregard to the agreement which he had made with Abhay Singh while receiving Idar. Maharaja Jai Singh himself was not in favour of taking their lives. He still held that they should be given suitable *jagirs* to feed themselves. Both Sangram Singh and Jai Singh did not want to invite trouble from the side of the Marathas who had already shown their inclination towards these princes. Bajirao had granted the saranjami of Jodhpur to Málhar Rao Holkar. In the same year the Maratha sardars, Kanthaji and Pilaji had entered the territory of Sojat. Abhay Singh had no other alternative but to buy peace from his brothers.

During the second viceroyalty of Malwa Jai Singh made efforts to effect a compromise between the Mughals and the Marathas. This compromise was aimed at maintaining the dignity of the imperial authority and also placating the Marathas. Jai Singh was sent for the second time to Malwa by the emperor when the situation was extremely disturbed. In order to bring the chaotic situation under control, Jai Singh advised the emperor that direct raids into Malwa can be prevented if the emperor himself directly makes an appeal to Raja Shahu as he was the one who could keep a check on the Maratha generals. In return for this immunity, Jai Singh suggested that ten lakhs of rupees to be granted in favour of Kushal Singh, the adopted son of Shahu.

⁶⁴ Letters written by Jai Singh quoted in Sharma, *Rajput*, p.265

In return for it, service in Malwa was to be rendered by a general of Shahu under the banners of Imperial subahdar and also collect the revenue of the *jagirs* assigned.⁶⁵

Jai Singh was opposed by a faction at the Imperial Court. They suggested that rather than spending the royal treasures on giving a tribute to Malwa would make a dent on the Imperial prestige. The money should be spent on maintaining a large army which could forcefully keep the Marathas out of the province. The dichotomy was that despite these suggestions, except for Muhammad Khan Bangash, none of the counsellors were ready to lead such an expedition. Jai Singh was able to convince the emperor for a few months only and soon he was replaced as governor with Muhammad Khan Bangash on the charges of treachery and sluggishness. His policy was also reversed.⁶⁶

Jai Singh was again appointed subahdar of Malwa for the third time in 1732. He was to maintain a minimum number of troops and could collect two thirds of the provincial revenue from land, customs, tribute etc.⁶⁷ In order to restore peace and order in Malwa, and to defend against the invading Marathas, Jai Singh decided to involve Mewar also. Under Sawai Jai Singh's direction, a plan of joint management and combined command of Mewar and Jaipur was prepared. The terms of proposed plans were mutually agreed upon. The details of the proposed plans were finalised by Dhabai Rao Nagraj who was deputed to Jaipur by Maharaja Sangram Singh. There was to be a joint army of both the states. The revenue was also to be shared between the two states. In 1732, the Maratha generals, Malhar Holkar, Ranoji Sindhia, Anand Rao Pawar and Vithoji Blue surrounded Jai Singh from all sides. Jai Singh had to

⁶⁵ Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan Through the ages*, p.130

⁶⁶ Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan Through the ages*, p.132

⁶⁷ Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan Through the ages*, p.134

offer peace by offering six lakhs of rupees. Holkar did not accept this amount and demanded for more. Jai Singh renewed the battle in the hope of reinforcement from the imperial authority but ultimately lost it and was forced to make peace. The Marathas finally evacuated Malwa after Jai Singh promised to give them six lakhs in cash and cede 28 Parganas in lieu of Chauth.

The internal developments in the Rajput states were now to take into account the Marathas intervention. The appearance of the Marathas on the territory of Mewar and Marwar paved the way for future inroads and mutual suspicion. The Maratha activities in Rajputana became more serious because of the entry of Malhar Rao into Bundi.⁶⁸ The apparent reason for their arrival in the territory of Bundi was to place Rao Budh Singh on the Bundi. The Maratha sardars succeeded in their objective and proclaimed Budh Singh as the ruler of Bundi. Although Budh Singh could not maintain his possession for long, as the military intervention of Maharaja Jai Singh restored Daler Singh on the gaddi of Bundi. He also sought help of Abhay Singh to drive out the Marathas from Rajputana. Even in the face of the imminent danger from the Marathas, the personal interest of the Rajput rulers were more important for them. Abhay Singh wanted to take advantage of the situation created due to Maratha incursions on Rajputana, to put forward his claim for the grant of the subadari of Ajmer. He also helped the Maratha sardars in reestablishing their control in Gujarat by not staying there.⁶⁹ The departure of Maharaja Abhay Singh from Gujarat after leaving all administrative responsibilities in the hands of his deputy had made it easier for the Marathas to regain their position in Gujarat.

⁶⁸ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.268

⁶⁹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.272

In order to check the threat from the Marathas the Rajput rulers assembled at Hurda. Besides Abhay Singh and Bakht Singh, the rulers of Kota, Bikaner, Kishangarh and Karauli were also present. It seems that these rulers had realized the danger posed by the Marathas' appearance in Rajputana. At this conference they came to an agreement to honour the following commitments:

- (1) They shall remain united in all circumstances, good or bad, with a pledge to abide by the terms.
- (2) No one shall help the defector of another.
- (3) After the rains, the situation shall be discussed and the chiefs of all the parties shall assemble at Rampura, and if for any reason a chief cannot come, he shall send his heir or some other person or a sardar.
- (4) Should such an heir commit any mistake out of inexperience, the Maharana alone shall be competent to correct it.
- (5) In every campaign all shall unite to conduct it.⁷⁰

Despite this treaty the Marathas could isolate the Rajput rulers from one another. While the Marathas were plundering the territory of Jaipur, Abhay Singh did not render any military help to Jai Singh. Later Abhay Singh, Jai Singh, Durjansal and other Rajput rulers joined Khan-i-Dauran to oust the Marathas from Rajputana. The combined army under the command of Khan-i-Dauran was harassed by the Maratha commanders, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Sindhia. The Maratha commandres could isolatate them from one another. The city of Sambhar was looted. Finally on the advice of Jai Singh , the Mir Bakshi Khan-i- Dauran, on behalf of the emperor promised the Marathas 22 lakhs of rupees as the chauth to Malwa. Abhay Singh

⁷⁰ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.272

proceeded to Delhi even when Marwar was facing the danger of the Marathas to fulfil his ambitions.

Abhay Singh's policy towards the Marathas was at variance with Jai Singh. Abhay Singh associated himself in the court with the party which openly opposed the policy of Jai Singh. This rivalry became apparent when on the advice of Jai Singh, Malhar Rao, Ranoji, etc., entered Marwar and conducted a fierce campaign which lasted for two months, culminating in the surrender of the Rathores before the Maratha commanders at Merta in 1736.⁷¹ The Maratha sardars left the territory of Marwar after securing a handsome indemnity. It became quite clear that the Hurda treaty was of no avail and no combined Rajput action against the Marathas was to be expected in future.

As soon as Jai Singh came to know that the emperor was planning to take away his two provincial viceroalties, he immediately took measures to protect himself and approached Baji Rao. He would take him to the emperor and if this plan of conciliation failed, he would be safely sent back from Jaipur. The Maharana of Mewar also ceded the Banhada Pargana to the Marathas. Jai Singh promised Baji Rao with five lakhs in cash and kind. He invited the Peshwa to his dominion and promised to introduce him to the emperor and secure a lasting peace between the Marathas and the Imperial government in return for a cash grant and *jagirs* in Malwa. He also promised to secure the grant of chauth for Raja Shahu and the cession of Malwa from the emperor. The emperor agreed to appoint Baji Rao as the Deputy Governor and de facto master of Malwa. Jai Singh was to continue as the nominal subahdar.

⁷¹ Sharma, *Rajput*, p.268

The diminishing power of the Mughal authority pushed Jai Singh to seek help from the Marathas to deal with Abhay Singh. The conflict among the Rajput rulers gave the Marathas to establish their foothold in Rajputana. After the death of Jai Singh, the political situation of the Kachhawah state started deteriorating due to a civil war on the issue of succession. The problem of succession was raised on the basis of the agreement of 1709, according to which the son of the Udaipuri Rani was to be installed on the gaddi after Jai Singh's death. Although Ishwari Singh had been recognised as the legitimate successor of Jai Singh, the claim of his younger brother, Madho Singh, who was the son of the Udaipuri Rani was supported by Rana Jagat Singh. The involvement of the Rana complicated the situation. He invited Maharao Durjansal of Kota for help. Maharao Durjansal who felt offended due to the intervention of Sawai Jai Singh in the affairs of Bundi, responded favourably to the request of the Rana.

The Rana in order to dislodge Ishwari Singh from the gaddi of Jaipur the Rana invited Holkar and promised him to pay rupees one crore if he seated Madho Singh on the gaddi of Jaipur.⁷² Accordingly, Maharana Jagat Singh along with the Maratha army marched against Jaipur. But the whole plan was disrupted as Ishwari Singh reached Amber before the arrival of the joint forces and offered money to the Maratha sardars who were won over to his side. The rulers of Udaipur, Jodhpur and Kota continued fighting against Ishwari Singh and each of them tried to win over the support of the Marathas. It is significant to note that in no case did the rulers of Jodhpur and Udaipur unite against Jaipur, because Abhay Singh did not support the cause of Madho Singh and the Rana was not pleased with Abhay Singh's policy of expansion. The role of the

⁷² Sharma, *Rajput*, p.281

Maratha sardars is interesting to note. They changed sides easily on the promise of money.

The Maratha sardars also became peace makers and settled disputes among Rajput rulers. Abhay Singh sought the help of Malharrao Holkar to secure control over the areas which fell under his control. Bakht Singh got help from the ruler of Bikaner. The fight did not take place, as due to the revival of the conflict between Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh, Holkars had to march against Amber. However, Malharrao Holkar brought about a reconciliation between the two brothers.

Maharaja Abhay Singh had always opposed the intervention of Jai Singh in the affairs of Bundi. However, after Jai Singh's death, Abhay Singh did not involve himself in the succession dispute at Jaipur. Holkar march against Ishwari Singh marked a change in Abhay Singh's policy towards Jaipur. Abhay Singh joined the Maratha and the Mewar armies. The combined armies of the Rana, Abhay Singh and the Marathas succeeded in defeating Ishwari Singh at Bagru. Ishwari Singh agreed to assign Bundi to Ummed Singh and four additional Parganas of Tonk to Madho Singh.⁷³ Thus the Maratha interference in Rajputana politics became a dominant factor in deciding the disputes of the Rajput rulers. The Maratha commanders were paid considerable money by the parties which engaged them in their conflicts.

The Marathas were the new centre of power and their involvement in the Rajputana made them strong both financially and militarily. With the increased strength they could later challenge the imperial power at Delhi also. They had already got the right to collect the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the territories of south and Gujarat. It was a matter of time only that they would try to expand in areas of Rajputana.

⁷³ Das, *Vir Vinod*, Vol. ii

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Relations of Amber and Marwar with the Mughals during 1707-1725

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The Mughal-Rajput relations entered a new phase after the death of Aurangzeb. The rivalry among the claimants to the throne, court politics at the Mughal court, rebellion in different areas of the empire etc. led to this. The Mughal Emperors though wanted to control the Rajput rulers were at times compelled to take help from them. The Rajput rulers tried to take advantage of this and repeated violation of imperial orders became a general practice. There were many instances of conflict with the imperial authority which started right after the death of Aurangzeb. The gradual weakening of the imperial authority emboldened the Rajput rulers to challenge them.

The Rajput policy of Bahadur Shah was in many ways a continuation of the policy Aurangzeb in Marwar¹. Bahadur Shah deprived Jai Singh of Amber, on the plea that there was a dispute for the Kachhawaha throne between the two brothers, Jai Singh and Vijay Singh. Jai Singh had long been the follower and favourite of Bidar Bakht, son of Azam Shah. His younger brother Vijay Singh had been a refugee at the court of Bahadur Shah. So, when Bahadur Shah arrived at Amber on his way to Marwar, he gave the Kachhawaha kingdom to Vijay Singh.² The name of the town was changed to Islamabad and a new faujdar Saiyid Ahmad Khan Barah was sent there. Amber had been in their Possession for a long time and such order had never been issued before. Jai Singh sought advice from the Maharana. At the time of Aurangzeb's death, Ajit Singh was an imperial mansabdar and making use of the situation occupied Jodhpur without the permission of the Emperor. But the arrival of Emperor Bahadur Shah at Ajmer left no other alternative before Ajit Singh but to offer his submission to the Emperor. The loss of their watan was an emotional issue for both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh decided to get their goals fulfilled by advocating their own cases and even by bribing the imperial officers. If it didn't work they were to detach from the imperial army.³

The other Rajput rulers also came in support of them. Rao Budh Singh of Budni despite having fought on the side of Bahadur Shah against Azam Shah and being granted many parganas including Kota decided to support both Rajput rajas. He stated that the Emperor was being revengeful against these Rajas for their role in the war of succession. Budh Singh also tried to

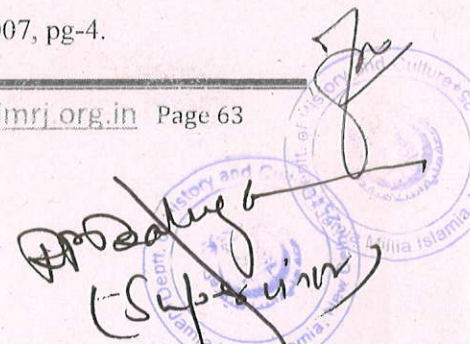
¹ Satish Chandra, Some News letters (Akhbarat) relating to Bahadur Shah I, PIHC, 1961, Vol.24, pg 142-44

² Gupta, R.K. and Bakshi, S.R., Rajasthan Through the ages- Jaipur Rulers and Administration, vol. 4, Sarup and sons, Delhi, 2008. Pg- 87.

³ Sangwan, R.S, Jodhpur and later Mughals, Pragati Publication, Delhi, 2007, pg-4.



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bring into the religious issues and stated that the Policy of the Emperor was anti-Hindu. It seems that Budh Singh had sympathy with Jai Singh as the latter had married his sister to the former just before the imperial control over Amber.⁴ It is worth noting that Jai Singh had not referred to the disputes with his brother on account of which the Emperor had justified his action against Amber. It seems that by raising the issue of his Participation against Bahadur Shah, he wanted the help of other Rajput rulers.

Jai Singh had sought help from Amar Singh and Ajit Singh but none of them responded favourably to the letters of Jai Singh. The position of nobles like Durgadas Rathor had elevated to the extent that after the failure to get any support from them that Maharaja Jai Singh wrote a letter to Durgadas Rathor and requested him to intercede on his behalf.⁵ However Durgadas made no effort to help Maharaja Jai Singh. The fact that in spite of the repeated request for help and raising the slogan of Hinduism being in danger none of these Rajput rulers paid any heed to the problem of Amber show that the religious factor was not important in the calculations of the Rajput Rajas.⁶

Ajit Singh favoured united action against the Mughals only when he himself was dislodged from Jodhpur. Following the order of the Emperor, both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh remained at the imperial camp while he proceeded to the South to deal with Kam Bakhsh. These Rajas were left with Khan-i-Zaman and no definite instructions were issued for them. Both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh expected that the Emperor would restore their watan jagirs soon. The period of absence of the Emperor was used by both the rulers. During the absence of Bahadur Shah for more than two years Amber and Marwar got united. Asad Khan, had to patch up with them and Ajit Singh and Jai Singh recovered their respective capitals. The attitude of the Mughal Emperor forced the two Rajas to come to an understanding.

They now decided to take a different course of action and abruptly broke away from the imperial army. This was a very important departure from the earlier practice and the imperial authority was challenged directly. They first went Ujjain and then to Pratapgarh. They were received well at both places by Badan Singh and Thakur Pratap Singh respectively. They came to know that the Maharana might be of some help to them. The relations of Jai Singh and Ajit Singh with Maharana Amar Singh had not been cordial for some time owing to some personal misunderstanding. On getting a favourable answer from the Maharana they proceeded towards Udaipur. Jai Singh reposed full faith in Maharana Amar Singh who received Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas very well.⁷ On the basis of Jodhpur-Khyat it is generally affirmed that at Udaipur the three Raja decided not only to recover their watans but also to bring the whole of Hindustan under their sway.⁸ The Maharana was warned not to help the rebel chiefs and was to persuade them to send their petition to the Emperor.

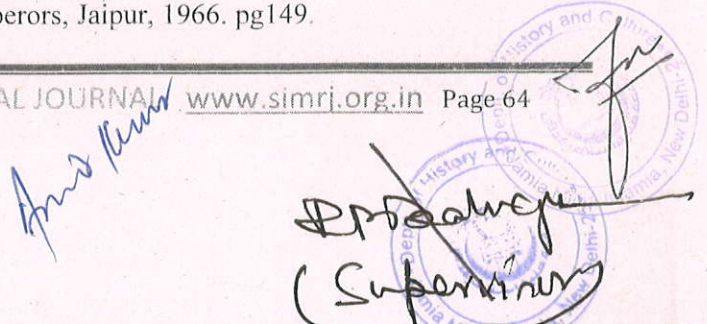
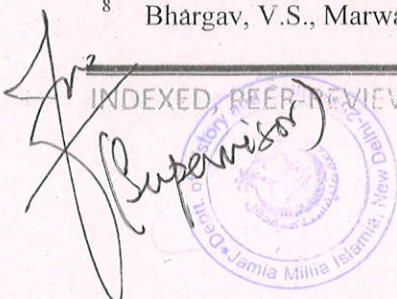
⁴ Sharma, G.D, Rajput Polity, Manohar, Delhi, 1977.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Shyamal, Das., Vir Vinod, Mewar ka itihaas, Jaipur, vol-ii.

⁸ Bhargav, V.S., Marwar and the Mughal Emperors, Jaipur, 1966. pg149.



It is significant to note that till then Maharana Amar Singh had not shown any indication of his desire to help these Rajas against the Mughal Emperor. The Maharana was morally obliged to Ajit Singh. Ajit Singh had helped the Maharana when prince Amar Singh had rebelled against him. Both Durgadas Rathor and Mukand Das Champawat were in the army which restored peace in Mewar and helped to establish cordial relations between father and son in Mewar. However due to the interference of Ajit Singh in the affairs of Sirohi which was granted to Maharana Amar Singh, the relations between the two had become strained. But later the misunderstanding was removed and their relations were further strengthened by the mediation of Durgadas Rathor and Rai Bhagwan Das. Durgadas Rathor had accepted the service of the Maharana.⁹ Rai Bhagwandas also maintained cordial relations with the Rana and held a jagir in Mewar.

When Ajit Singh and Jai Singh accompanied by Durgadas reached Mewar, the Rana received them warmly. He also gave his daughter in marriage to Jai Singh. This was very significant event as the Kacchwahs were accepted as saga by Mewar.¹⁰ The marriage was performed on the condition that the son born out of this marriage would ascend the gaddi of Jaipur and if a daughter was born, she would not be married to any musalmaan.¹¹ This agreement later became a bone of contention between the two states. It seems that after having failed to persuade the Emperor, they decided to get the help of the Rana.¹² The Rana got an opportunity to get into prominence by playing the role of a mediator. This, in fact, happened when the Rana received a nishan from prince Jahandar Shah in which he was asked not to assist the two Rajput rulers, but to send their arzis to the Emperor for pardon. The prince gave the assurance that he would obtain the sanads of the jagirs and the payment of salaries which though already sanctioned had been delayed because of the ahalkars. The Maharana then sent the arzis of Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas to the court in which they sought forgiveness for leaving the court without permission.¹³ The Rana could be assessed on the basis of the contents of the above correspondence. He didn't want to antagonise the imperial authority and at the same time wanted to be with the Rajput rulers.

He was in favour of the restoration of the watan jagirs to these Rajas and thus he was pleading their case in the Mughal court. Both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh had also sent their arzis with the same thing in mind. Apparently Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were waiting for a favourable response even after their flight from the imperial camp. The Rana was using his own influence for getting back their watans. But failing to get any encouraging reply from the side of the Emperor they decided to regain their watan lands by force.

In July 1708 diwan RamChandra Muhta and Shyam Sing Kachhawah succeeded in securing their control over Amber and the Mughal faujdar, Husain Khan Baraha, was forced to leave

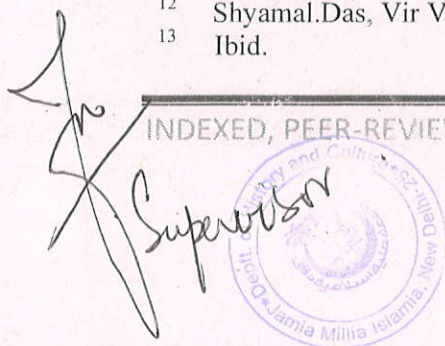
⁹ Raghuveer Singh and Manohar Singh Ranawat, ed. Jodhpur Rajya ri khyat, ICHR and Panchsheel prakashan, Jaipur, 1988.

¹⁰ Bhatnagar, V.S, Sawai Jai Singh, Rajasthan Hindi Granth Academy, Jaipur, 1998. Pg-30.

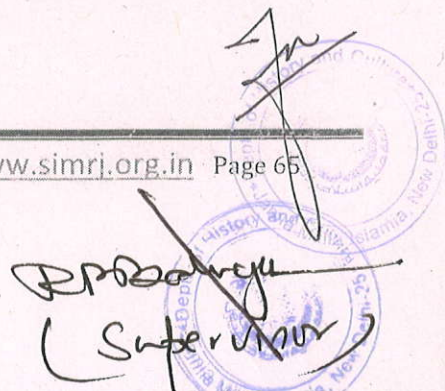
¹¹ Ibid. pg-34

¹² Shyamal.Das, Vir Vinod, Mewar ka itihaas, Jaipur, vol-ii.

¹³ Ibid.



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Amber.¹⁴ After this achievement Ajit Singh, Jai Singh and Durgadas assembled at Pushkar to decide the future course of action. Here it was decided that the Rana should also come and participate. Accordingly, the Rajput rulers persuaded Durgadas Rathor to go to Udaipur, but the decision had to be changed later on.

At the Mughal court there were different opinions. Asad Khan wanted a conciliatory policy and suggested a mansab of four thousand personnel and three thousand zat and the title of Raja' to be given to Ajit Singh, and a mansab of two thousand and five hundred personnel and two thousand zat along with the title of Raja' to be given to Jai Singh. Munim Khan, on the other hand, insisted for retributive measures. In the meantime Saiyyid Hussain Ali made preparations to launch an attack upon Amber. These political events explain the necessity of it. Saiyyid Husain Khan, the defeated faujdar of Amber, after collecting sufficient army, had advanced towards Amber from Narnol to regain control over Amber. The Rajput Rajas, therefore, decided not to give any chance to Husain Khan to achieve his goal. The absence of Durgadas would have delayed the action of the Rajput Rajas and provided enough time to the Mughals to strengthen their position. It was also doubtful that the Rana himself would have agreed to come personally to help Jai Singh and Ajit Singh against the Mughals. The unity among them was always in doubt as each one of them was looking for his own personal gains. Both the Rajas and Durgadas Rathor proceeded towards Sambhar. Saiyyid Husain Khan, with his brothers, the faujdars of Merta and Narnol, challenged them at Sambhar. In the battle of Sambhar Saiyyid Husain Khan and his brothers were killed and the Rajputs gained the victory. But Jai Singh changed his strategy very soon.

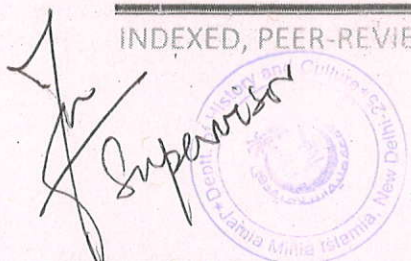
The Sikhs had risen up in rebellion in the Punjab under the leadership of Banda. The faujdar of Sirhind reported that a huge crowd had gathered at Sadhaura, and hailed sometimes the Guru and sometimes declared that a Saiyyid had come in their midst with miraculous beings was leading them. They had ravaged the pargana in the doab upto the river (Jamuna), besieged Saharanpur, and killed many persons in a clash near Lahore. The reference to the alleged mysterious appearance of a Saiyyid among the Sikhs shows the continued hold of Mahadavite legends among the Muslims, and their refusal to believe that the success of the Sikhs could be explained by purely rational factors. which reported large-scale Sikh activities in Panipat and Sonapat, pointedly referred to the fact that the zamindars of pargana Samana, Kanthal etc., had joined the Sikhs. The support of the local zamindars appears to have been an important factor in the rapid success of the Sikh.¹⁵

Nizam Mulk tried to avert the Rajput-Sikh coalition and chose the path of diplomacy rather than that of armed confrontation with the Rajputs.¹⁶ Through Asad Khan he sought to prevail upon the Emperor to grant a Mansab of 3500/3000 and the parganas of Amber, Phagi and Dausa and a Jagir worth thirty five lakhs to Jai Singh. Jai Singh on his part sent Dewan Bihari Das and Har Charan Pancholi to carry on the negotiations with the imperial authority.

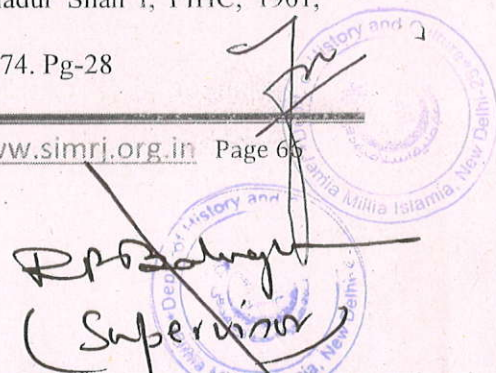
¹⁴ Chandra, Satish. Parties and Politics at Mughal Court, PPH, Delhi, 1959. Pg-31.

¹⁵ Satish Chandra, Some News letters (Akhbarat) relating to Bahadur Shah I, PIHC, 1961, Vol.24, pg 142-44

¹⁶ Tikkiwal, Harish Chandra, Jaipur and the later Mughals, Jaipur, 1974. Pg-28



Amir Khan



Meanwhile Jai Singh came to know about the march of Saiyyid Abdullah Khan, the newly appointed Nazim, towards Ajmer. He urged Maharana Amar Singh as well as Ajit Singh to make a concerted move to check the advance of Saiyyid Abdullah Khan who did not happen to be sympathetic to their cause. The Maharana appeared evasive although Ajit Singh agreed to mobilise. Subsequent to his arrival at Merta, Ajit Singh awaited for the march of Jai Singh. Jai Singh promised to move when Ajit Singh proceeded ahead from Merta. Accordingly, Ajit Singh continued his march and besieged Shujaat Khan, the Mughal Subedar, for a fortnight and made him to pay a hefty amount.

The Emperor then appointed Nizam ul Mulk as Nazim in place of Shujaat Khan. Jai Singh tried to use his good relations with Nizam ul Mulk and wrote to him to plead his case before the Emperor. Nizam ul Mulk was apprehensive of the activities of Ajit Singh. To reaffirm his loyalty Jai Singh presented two ashrafis and two horses with golden harness to the Emperor. The Emperor accepted the present of ashrafis only and granted Jaisinghpura to him. Jai Singh then opened negotiations through Shujaat Khan, Nazim of Ajmer but the Emperor was ready to increase of 500 only in the mansab of Jai Singh and the grant of pargana Deoti as enjoyed by him during the reign of Aurangzeb. Jai Singh was not willing to accept such a degraded status.¹⁷ He then got nearer to Ajit Singh and in close collaboration with him reiterated his decision to organise a united front against the Imperial forces. He sent an emissary, Fatehchand to Karauli to open hostilities against Hidayat Ullah and Ajit Singh encouraged the Kolis to plunder the mahals around Ahmedabad. Ram Chand, Dewan of Jai Singh, besieged the Naib-Qiladar of Ranthambhor and the Mughals could push them back with great difficulty.¹⁸

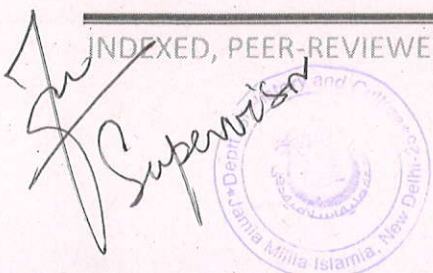
Thus it is Obvious that while these negotiations were going on Jai Singh avoided attacking the imperial thanas. Jai Singh also wanted to secure the favour of the Emperor as is obvious from the fact that Shujat Khan praised Jai Singh for his non-cooperation with the Rathors and for Persuading Ajit Singh to return from Ajmer. Further, Jai Singh was aware that Vijay Singh was pressing the Emperor for granting him Amber. Thus while both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh were exchanging cordial letters, each of them was making Individual efforts to get back his watan. Since Bahadur Shah failed to satisfy the Rajput Rajas regarding their watans. Ajit Singh and Jai Singh Continued their united Opposition. But the Rajput rulers persisted in Pleading their cases before the Emperor through the Maharana as well as through their respective vakils at the court.¹⁹ Ajit Singh took the lead in inviting the Maharana with his army to invade the imperial territory The Maharana sent an army under the command of Durgadas Rathor.

While Ajit Singh was preparing to demonstrate his Strength, Maharaja Jai Singh was persuading the former to have an audience with the Emperor. The letter of Bihari Das explains that Maharaja Jai Singh was not willing to participate in any activity which would cause further complications. In fact, Jai Singh and Ajit Singh were suspicious of one another and were not ready to come into conflict with the Mughal Emperor. Thus, the united front against the

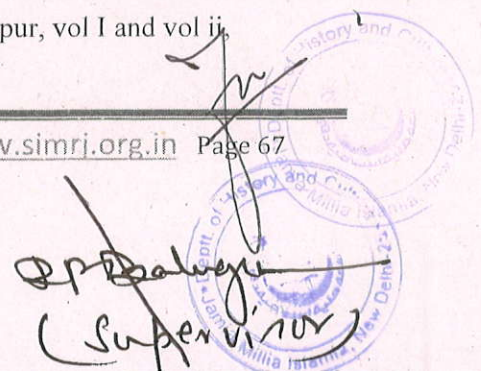
¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹A Descriptive list of the Vakil Reports addressed to the rulers of Jaipur, vol I and vol ii, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner, 1967.



Amar Kumar



Mughals had been virtually defunct. At the same time it was obvious that these Rajput Rajas would continue their struggle till they got their respective watans. It is to be noted that a powerful section of the nobility led by Asad Khan, the former wazir of Aurangzeb, and his son, Zulfiqar Khan, the mir-hakhshi, held a sympathetic attitude towards these Rajput Rajas.²⁰ Bhandari Khivsi, the vakil of Maharaja Ajit Singh at the court, was engaged in negotiations with Emperor Bahadur Shah through prince Azim-us-Shan who was high in his father's favour. Prince Azim-us-Shan told Bhandari Khivsi that nothing could be expected unless both the Rajas attended the court personally.

On hearing about the imperial expedition, Jai Singh and Ajit Singh again combined together and made preparations to combat the imperial army. Ajit Singh besieged Indra Singh of Nagor and withdrew after realizing a ransom of Rupees fifteen thousand. The Maharana tried to intervene and requested the Emperor to assume a liberal attitude towards them. The Emperor instructed him to advise the aggrieved chieftains to seek forgiveness. Jai Singh and Ajit Singh sent four emissaries for seeking forgiveness.

In 1710 the Emperor ordered Mahabat Khan to proceed along with Chhatrasal and Raja Budh Singh to bring Jai Singh and Ajit Singh to the court. The farman addressed to Ajit Singh stated that his faults were being pardoned and that Jodhpur was being conferred on him on condition that he would serve the Emperor and would attend the court with Zulfiqar Khan.²¹ Bahadur Shah was keen that Maharaja Ajit Singh and Jai Singh should join him to meet the growing Sikh menace.²² He was afraid of the collusion of the Rajput chiefs with the rebellious Sikhs and tried to resolve the deadlock quickly. Prince Azim Ush Shan, too, was keen on placating the Rajput chiefs since he banked upon the Rajput support in the contest for the seizure of the throne after the demise of the Emperor. The Nizam as well as Asad Khan also supported this policy. To The death of Wazir Munim Khan who was opposed to this made this easier.

But Maharaja Ajit Singh sought some time as he wanted to stay home for some time to establish order there. He as well as Maharaja Jai Singh were given leave for six months. In spite of repeated summons from the court, Maharaja Ajit Singh arrived at the court after much delay.²³ Pleading for the subadari of Malwa or Gujarat, Maharaja Ajit Singh wanted to keep his control over Sambhar and Didwana. He had not thus so far received any order regarding his mansab and hence he delayed his appearance in the Mughal court. This delay by Ajit Singh was not appreciated by Jai Singh who showed his inclination to attend the court, thereby leaving Ajit Singh alone to become the target of imperial displeasure. In the court, Bhandari Khivsi was repeatedly urging that Ajit Singh would be starting immediately. Ajit Singh was finally recognized as the ruler of Jodhpur and was granted the mansab of 4000/4500 and Jodhpur along with the parganas of Sojat, Siwana and Phalodi. Outside Marwar, Ajit Singh was granted the faujdari of Sorath. Ajit Singh was not given Merta and it remained in khalisa.

²⁰ Chandra, Satish. Parties and Politics at Mughal Court, PPH, Delhi, 1959. Pg-35.

²¹ B.N. Reu, Some imperial Farmans addressed to the rulers of Jodhpur, PIHC, 1947, Vol.10, pg 350-57

²² Chandra, Satish. Parties and Politics at Mughal Court, PPH, Delhi, 1959. Pg-37.

²³ Ibid.39.

During the reign of Bahadur Shah, the demands of Ajit Singh could not be satisfied. Jai Singh met the same fate. Hence, their mutual association continued, though at the court their representatives were pleading that their interests were separate. After the death of Bahadur Shah the Mughal court politics went in favour of both the rajas. Jahandar Shah asked both of them to be present themselves for the royal audience.²⁴ Raghunath Bhandari and Bhikaridas diwans of Jodhpur and Amber respectively were honoured in the court and Ajit Singh was granted the subedari of Gujarat with the mansab of 8000/8000 and Jai Singh was granted subedari of Malwa with a mansab of 8000/7000.²⁵ At the same time, Rathor Durgadas was also granted the mansab of 4000/3000 and pargana of Idar in jagir on the recommendation of Zulfiqar Khan.²⁶ The mansab and the assignment of the subadari of Gujarat and Malwa were highly appreciated at the court as well as in Jodhpur and Amber but it was not implemented due to death of Jahandar Shah. Thus the policy of Bahadur Shah was abandoned soon after his death. In the war of succession between Jahandar Shah and Farrukhsiyar, both Ajit Singh and Jai Singh didn't take any side.

The political uncertainty at the Mughal court enabled Ajit Singh to extend his influence over neighbouring states. Raj Singh, the ruler of Kisangarh, had taken sides with Azim-us-Shan against the Emperor. After his arrival at Kisangarh, Raj Singh wrote to Ajit Singh to help him in case he was persecuted. Ajit Singh, considering that Raj Singh was his nephew, agreed to do so. But Raj Singh had to pay the price of this assurance. With the intention of bringing the adjoining territories under his control, Ajit Singh wrote to Raj Singh to come with an army. But Raj Singh did not pay any heed. Therefore conquering Banderwara, Bhinai and Vijaigarh, Maharaja Ajit Singh reached Deogarh. When he was camping at Deogarh he again called Raj Singh but the latter gave no response. Therefore, Ajit Singh invaded Kisangarh and took possession of it. At first Raj Singh offered a stiff resistance, but later on made submission and concluded an agreement with Ajit Singh according to which Ajit Singh incorporated some of his areas into his own territory. Taking advantage of the political instability at the Mughal court during the war of succession, Maharaja Ajit Singh delayed the evacuation of Sambhar and Didwana. Since the restoration of watan jagirs to Ajit Singh and Jai Singh, Asad Khan had written many times to Ajit Singh to remove his thanas from Sambhar and to hand over their control to imperial officers. It seems, Ajit Singh wanted to keep his control over Sambhar and Didwana till he had been assured of the intention of the Emperor. Perhaps he was interested in retaining these parganas in his jagir because he was not interested in getting his appointment of choice. It is quite possible that by keeping his control over these areas he wanted to keep a good source of income with him.

After the death of Bahadur Shah, the Rajput Rajas continued their control over Sambhar and Didwana. Zulfiqar Khan adopted a more strict attitude over the control of these parganas by the Rajput Rajas. This action of the Rajas, which amounted to disobedience, led to a political crisis. In these parganas the Mughal Emperor had assigned the jagirs to his mansabdars but

²⁴ Sangwan, R.S, Jodhpur and later Mughals, Pragati Publication, Delhi, 2007, pg-35.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Sharma, G.D, Rajput Polity, Manohar, Delhi, 1977. Pg-229.

none of them could get hold over them.²⁷ Zulfikar Khan, after the accession of Jahandar Shah, strongly told the wakil of Maharaja Jai Singh that he should ask both the Rajas to remove their thanas immediately, otherwise they would be punished. The wazir warned that in case of an imperial march, Ajit Singh could save himself by taking shelter in the hill areas but Jai Singh would not get any place to hide. He also demanded that Jai Singh should persuade Ajit Singh to behave like a Raja and not like a dacoit. Later, after taking over the charge, the new vazir of Farrukh Siyar, Saiyid Abdullah Khan, again asked Pancholi Jagjiwan Ram to ask Jai Singh and Ajit Singh to remove the thanas from Sambhar.²⁸ Ajit Singh was also asked to deposit the amount which he had collected from the haweli of Ajmer. Ajit Singh did not take these instructions very seriously. He wanted the restoration of his mansab which was once promised to him. He also repeated his claim for the grant of the subadari of Gujarat or Malwa through his wakil Bhandari Khivsi. Maharaja Jai Singh also approached the Emperor with a similar request.²⁹ While these claims were being pressed, Ajit Singh continued his offensive activities which caused great concern at the court. Maharaja Ajit Singh had been nursing for long the foul desire to kill Rathor Mohkam Singh who had been pressing his right for the gaddi of Jodhpur.

After the succession of Farrukhsivar, Mohkam Singh repeated the old claim. In the meantime, Ajit Singh occupied Merta after the flight of Indra Singh who was then staying there. The occupation of Merta was clearly a violation of the conditions on which it had been given to Ajit Singh by Bahadur Shah. Indra Singh complained to the Emperor and repeated his claim over Jodhpur.³⁰ Although the Emperor did not give much weight to the claim of Indra Singh, it became necessary for him to check the activities of Ajit Singh. Ajit Singh got Mohkam Singh killed, while he was on a visit to Abdullah Khan. It is difficult to determine the exact motives behind Ajit Singh's aggressive activities, it seems that he wanted to demonstrate his power and compel the Emperor to concede his demand. However, a study of the reports sent by Pancholi Jagjiwan Ram to Jai Singh, shows that as early as June 1713, Farrukh Siyar had accepted the claims of the two Rajas over their respective watan jagirs. The question of granting them jagirs outside their watan territories was delayed as Abdullah Khan wanted a reassessment of their jagirs. It was, therefore, stressed that an assignment to the Rajas of the jagirs outside their watans could be made only after they had submitted a statement of the jama of their respective parganas. The vakils of Jodhpur and Amber on the other hand held that the assignments should be made on the basis of the old jama figures. This was the main cause of contention. The relationship between the Mughals and the Rajput rulers kept on fluctuating during this period.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.pg-231

²⁹ Chandra, Satish. Parties and Politics at Mughal Court, PPH, Delhi, 1959. Pg-90

³⁰ Sharma, G.D, Rajput Polity, Manohar, Delhi, 1977. Pg-231.